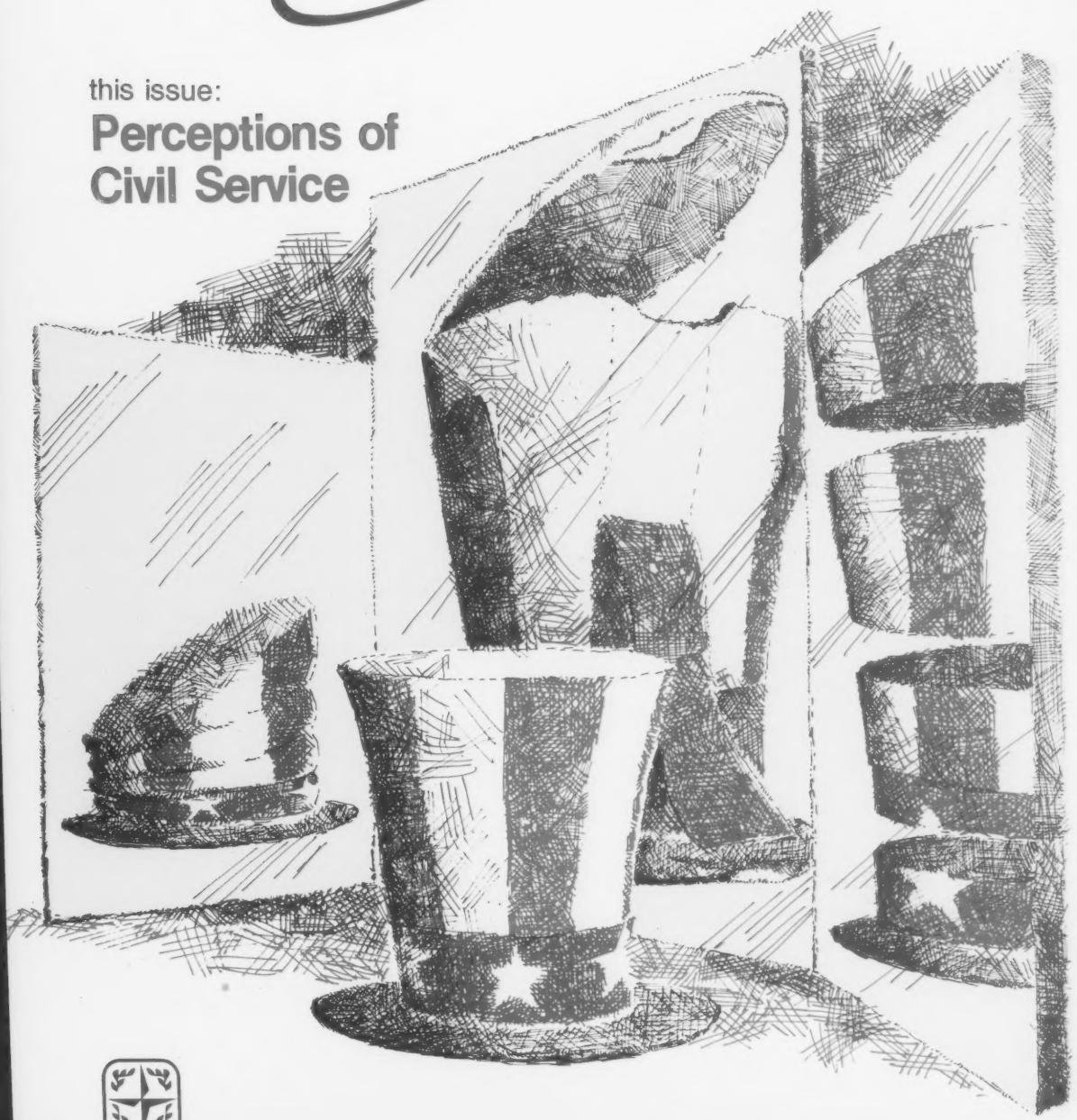
CIVIL SERVICE Journal

Vol. 18 No. 3 January/March 1978

this issue:

Perceptions of Civil Service



U.S. Civil Service Commission

Memo to Managers

For too long now, Government managers have had to work within a personnel system that blocks their attempts to use it as a tool of progressive management. How frustrating it is when innovative leaders, willing and able to manage, are thwarted by an archaic network of self-defeating rules and regulations.

Reorganization of the Government—specifically, reorganization of Federal personnel management—will change the milieu in which managers manage. We are recommending changes in the system that will give each of you, as a manager, more clout to get things done, increase your productivity as well as that of your employees, reward employees who deserve it, fire those who deserve firing, and put "service" back in the public service in terms of paying proper attention to the needs of the taxpayer—the reason for our efforts.

You will find that being a Government manager will be more challenging in the days to come, for even as you get more clout, your bosses will be expecting more *from* you in return.

We are recommending establishment of an Executive Service, which would ensure better selection, development, and use of managerial talent, with the overall aim being to improve the delivery of services by improving the caliber of Federal management.

Government workers—and Government managers—will find that changes in the way Government works will have as their corollary a renewal of public confidence. I know that all of you who are weary of attacks on our competence will join with me in welcoming a new spirit of public attention to our strengths and our accomplishments.

This issue of the *Journal* touches on some facets of how the public perceives us—what the perception is, how it got that way, what we can do about it. But working on our image really means working on the system that gives us an image—such basics as promoting better management through better procedures, reexamining our programs to see how well they serve today's needs, making government more responsive to public needs.

By opening up our minds to change, we open up possibilities for improvements. No one need fear change, and I hope you will carry this message to all your employees. You who manage public programs are in the best position to assure the work force that changes in Federal personnel management will help them do their jobs with less hassle, more efficiency, and higher public esteem.

The changes coming are good ones, this much I can tell you. We will put an end to the patchwork type of systems that have been built up over time. As managers, you will be given the opportunity to prove what you can do with a streamlined system of public management.

The system cannot run management. Management must be able and willing to run the system.

Alan K. Campbell

CIVIL SERVICE Journal

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Shot Takes

White-Collar Minorities Up More Than a Third in Seven Years: In the seven years, 1969-76, General Schedule (white-collar) employment of minorities rose 37 percent, compared with a 5 percent increase for nonminorities.

Minorities accounted for 21 percent of all Federal civilian employees as of November 1976, compared with 14 percent in 1969.

Women comprised 30.1 percent of all full-time Federal employees in 1976, compared with 29.8 percent in 1975.

Comparing the Federal and private sectors, the Federal Government is well ahead in overall employment of minorities in professional, administrative, technical, and clerical jobs. The private sector, however, has higher percentages of women and/or specific minorities in some categories.

(CSC Press Release, Nov. 29, 1977.)

President Seeks Simpler Governmental Regulations: The President has issued an Executive order in draft form to solicit public comment on proposed procedures for issuing new regulations and simplifying or eliminating current regulations.

The purpose would be to increase public and government participation in developing regulations, and permit effective oversight of the consequences of the regulations.

The proposed order requires that regulations be as simple and clear as possible. "They should achieve legislative goals effectively and efficiently. They should not impose unnecessary burdens on the economy, on individuals, on public or private organizations, or on State and local governments."

(For further information see The Federal Register, Vol. 42, No. 223--Nov. 18, 1977, p. 59740.)

Per Diem Increased in 17 Cities: Chicago from $43 to $45; Houston from $35 to $41; San Francisco from $41 to $45; Baltimore from $35 to $41; Detroit, $35 to $42; Las Vegas, $38 to $48 (the largest increase); Miami, $35 to $43; Newark, N.J., $42 to $45; Dallas, $35 to $39; New Orleans, $35 to $44; Albany, N.Y., $35 to $39; Bridgeport, Conn., $35 to $40; Charleston, W. Va., $35 to $39; Hartford, Conn., $35 to $39; Milwaukee, $35 to $39; Minneapolis, $35 to $41; and Providence, R.I., $35 to $40.

The maximum statutory per diem rate is $50.

(Federal News Clip Sheet, November 1977, No. 180.)

"Minimum Hardship" During Reorganization: A Presidential memorandum has directed that the "displacement of employees" during the planned reorganization should be precluded through setting up "additional mechanisms for providing continued employment for those who face displacement."

(Presidential Memorandum of Aug. 12, 1977.)

President Urges Hiring of Women: A recent Presidential memorandum to heads of departments and agencies says, "I ask you that you work, aggressively and creatively, to provide maximum opportunities for women in the Federal career service. This means developing, within merit principles, innovative programs to recruit and hire qualified women and to be sure they have the opportunity for satisfying career development."
(Presidential Memorandum of Nov. 17, 1977.)

Special Hiring Plan for Women and Minorities Debated: CSC has held two public hearings on a plan formulated by Vice Chairman Jule M. Sugarman. His proposal is designed to permit experimentation with special hiring methods for filling jobs in which minorities or women are underrepresented, with possible conversion to career appointments.

If statistical analysis indicates that an agency's work force, or its hiring rate, shows an adverse impact on a given group, the agency may ask the Commission for authority to invoke the plan. This, however, would not be mandatory.

Many changes were suggested by those testifying. CSC will consider all comments before either revising and recirculating the original plan, or adopting a new one.
(Administrator's Alert, December 1977, Vol. 8, No. 6.)

Award for Retirees: $2,500 will be awarded annually to the Federal Retiree of the Year by the National Association of Retired Federal Employees in cooperation with CSC.

The first award will be made to a person who retired during 1977.

Competition is open to Federal civilian workers who retire on "immediate annuity" after 25 years of service, which may include military.
(FPM Bulletin 451-16, Nov. 19, 1977.)

Two Win Nobel: Two researchers from Veterans Administration hospitals shared the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize in Medicine for their work in the chemistry of human hormones.

Dr. Rossalyn S. Yalow, 56, of the Bronx (N.Y.) VA hospital is the second woman to win the Nobel in medicine. In 1961 she received the Federal Woman's Award.

Dr. Andrew V. Schally, 50, and the second winner, is affiliated with the VA hospital in New Orleans. He conducted research in the brain chemistry of peptide hormones.

In the past 9 years, 6 Federal employees have received the Nobel. Four were from the National Institutes of Health.
(Federal News Clip Sheet, November 1977, No. 180.)

Solicitation Permitted: CSC has lifted a long-time ban on releasing the names, titles, grades, salaries, and duty stations of Federal employees. Previously, they were withheld if there was reason to believe the request was for commercial purposes. The Commission's action is in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act of 1974.
(Federal News Clip Sheet, November 1977, No. 180.)

--Ed Staples

reorganization can help the current poor image of the public service

RUNNING OUT OF ESTEEM?

by Alan K. Campbell
Chairman
U.S. Civil Service Commission

"While speaking poorly of public servants in the aggregate, the public speaks favorably of individual employees."

TO BE A NEW APPOINTEE in the Federal Government is to see and to experience familiar situations in a new way. One such, for me, is the attitude toward public service.

As a new Civil Service Commission Chairman, I am alarmed at the ferocity of the public attitude toward public employees and public service. There is a constant barrage of adverse news stories and "think pieces." Polling citizens for their attitudes, surveyors report time after time on the poor reputation of the public service—Federal, State, and local.

Certainly, as one who has spent his adult life preparing young people for public service careers, and in serving in advisory posts in government, I came to the Chairmanship rather fully informed on public/public employee relationships.

But I must repeat that old truism that it is one thing to know about a situation, while it is another to experience it. Having experienced it, I am convinced that the public attitude requires detailed examination and response.

The reason for my concern is four-fold:

One: It is simply unfair to malign and scapegoat all public employees; these days, all public employees—good and bad, career and elected—are tarred with the same brush.

Two: Constant attacks on public personnel are counterproductive and costly in terms of lowered morale. As I see it, these attacks on public service can come unhappily close to demonstrating the principle of self-fulfilling prophecy . . . that is, labeling can determine your own actions and the actions of others toward you.

Low self-esteem, I would argue, shows itself in many ways, some visible, some not.

Federal employees' productivity has grown at what some would consider a snail's pace of 1.2 percent yearly since 1967. The fact that the private, nonfarm productivity growth rate is only 1.3 percent yearly over the same period is no reason for self-congratulation.

I don't know how much better the productivity gains would have been if every Federal worker had felt less beleaguered and more appreciated. And of course there are many other factors to consider in analyzing these figures. But my head and my heart tell me that the worker who feels appreciated is likely to be a better worker—and a better investment for the taxpayer.

Three: Adverse effect on possible job applicants. Researchers and writers have often mentioned the concern that government's low salaries and poor reputation might scare off good prospects. But the last 5 years have seen a turnaround: government salaries, especially Federal, are more attractive, as is the security offered in the currently depressed job market. Seemingly, we have no need to worry, with 76 inquiries and 11 applicants for every Federal job. What, then, is the problem? The answer: We still want the best, and we want the successful applicants to come to work with a high morale and a certainty that they were right to choose public service.

Four: Many attacks are at best only partly accurate; others are false, misleading, and malicious.

I would argue that the effects go far beyond innocent joshing and an occasional salvo of slurs. The attitude toward public employees as a group is serious. The consequences —the "fall-out"—are serious. The public employee and the taxpaying public are polarized.

Therefore, in my view, to the extent that this constant denigrating of public service is factual, public employees have the obligation to respond.

Let me enlarge on that.

Of Quotes . . .

Here's a headline: "Washington's Bureaucrats 'Real Rulers of America.' ". The article calls government employees "the new mandarins." It has a certain ring, but what does it mean?

Or another, "Government: The Incompetent's Best Friend."

And hear this from David Brinkley: ". . . the Federal Government, through good times and bad, sucks in the money from all over the country and spends a good deal of it on itself and its employees. People get paid whether they produce anything or not, whether they work hard or not at all. And it's almost unheard of for anyone to be fired. Government pay is higher than civilian pay for the same work. So are the benefits. And people get raises by just staying on, regardless of merit."

Or this quote from David B. Wilson (Boston *Globe*), "The bureaucratic life rewards conspiracy, sycophancy, ideological conformity, caution, and class solidarity. It punishes innovation, originality, and the work ethic."

I think you get the idea.

"... we hope to direct the Federal service toward meeting the high ideals Americans have for their public service."

. . . and Polls . . .

Opinion polls show the low esteem suffered by public service employees.

A recent Gallup Poll showed that two-thirds of Americans think that Government workers are better paid than their private sector counterparts. That poll also reported that two-thirds believe that Government employees work less hard, and three-fourths believe that Government workers enjoy excessive fringe benefits.

It is true that this is merely the latest in the long history of adverse polls and opinions about the public service. But, I would argue, there is a new intensity to the condemnation.

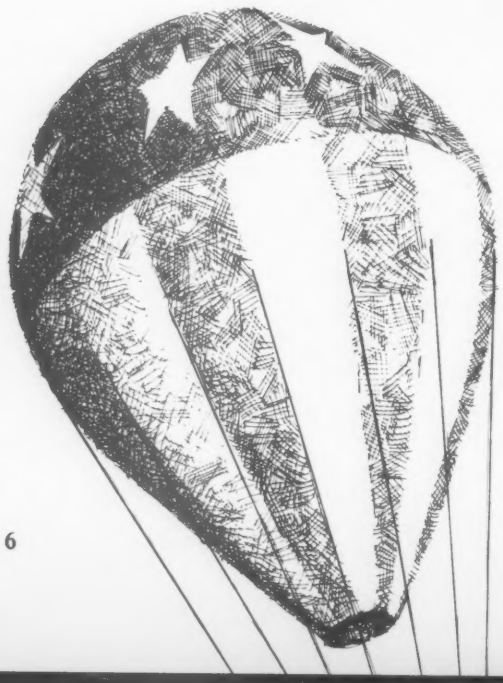
First, I would note, we can reach back through the files and in almost any year pluck out a survey that reports anti-public service sentiment. Chicago employees in the late 1920's were quoted in Leonard White's pioneering study as feeling that "people don't understand or appreciate what we're doing," or "people think we are a bunch of loafers or crooks."

The Brookings survey of the early 1960's reported that civil servants were seen as honest, but unambitious, motivated by security, doing routine work. The public service was seen as an army of clerks.

Parenthetically, this image continues to flourish in the face of the most vivid evidence to the contrary, such as the recent awarding of Nobel Prizes to two public employees: Dr. Rosalyn Yalow and Dr. Andrew Schally. Both are career research scientists with the Veterans Administration.

A 1971 Harris Survey contrasting attitudes toward Federal, business, and labor leaders showed that the Federal leaders got highest marks for intelligence, but trailed in the "hard workers" category.

And Federal leaders unfortunately were felt to place too much emphasis on "playing it safe."



Right at the bottom—26th out of 26 institutions named—was the Federal bureaucracy in ability to get things done, as shown in a 1976 *U.S. News and World Report* survey. Just ahead were the politicians. By comparison, banks, television, and the medical profession topped the list as favorites.

We can also get a fix on attitudes by querying career planners and their advisors.

Politicians/public officials ranked near bottom (1 percent) in 1970 when Harris assembled data about careers that appealed to youth. More appealing were such occupations as teachers or professor, business executive, or explorer.

"Go into government, young man" would be the advice of only 5 percent answering a 1973 Gallup Poll. But 28 percent said they would advise a youth to become a doctor, and 14 percent would vote for a legal career.

Comparing public and private sector employment, 70 percent of the students queried in 1975 voted for private companies as the places to get ahead, while only 23 percent named the Federal Government as the place for the ambitious.

Even though public service has never enjoyed a high reputation, in the 1970's that reputation does seem to have changed—for the worse.

When you contrast attitudes over a span of time—as the Harris organization did in 1973—you discover an actual decline in confidence. In a survey for the Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations, Harris reported the grim news that for the first time in their 10 years of surveying opinions, more than half were disenchanted with government. Only 19 percent in that poll expressed confidence in the execu-

"The public sees the top of the system as being overloaded with senior officials who are there simply because they have outlasted everyone else...and who like stone, are unchangeable and immovable until retirement, death, and other "acts of God" haul them away."

tive branch. That was 8 points lower than 1972, and 22 lower than 1966.

In that same poll, only 17 percent said "yes" when asked whether the best people are attracted to public life. As for desirable qualities in public servants, what the public wanted was honesty—66 percent said so. Other "qualities which best describe the kind of people who should work in government" were dedication to hard work (56 percent); desire to help people (51 percent); intelligence (41); courage (35); concern about freedom (28); public spirit (27).

In a more recent Harris Survey (1975), fully half felt that the executive branch was "mostly out of touch." Congress, getting a higher score at 54 percent, was obviously considered even more out of touch.

By early 1977, we heard similar bulletins. A Harris Survey reported 58 percent feel alienated or disenchanted about the people running the country.

How productive are government workers? Public opinion in the early '70s thought government productivity was very low—right at the bottom. Foreign manufacturers, doctors and nurses, and farmers got top place. Yet, as we know, the Federal sector productivity growth rate compares favorably with the private, nonfarm rate.

In considering all these negative attitudes expressed toward the public service, I would still say that the outlook is not totally bleak.

. . . and Paradoxical Things

I would add that we know there is a paradox at work here, and that there is still a reservoir of goodwill toward what the public service *can* be. Moreover, the government, the public employee, *can* improve the quality of the work force and the consequent delivery of public services. The public servant *and* the public can improve communication.

The paradox is this: While speaking poorly of public servants in the aggregate, the public speaks favorably of individual employees. In 1929, White noted this paradox. When generally queried about public employees, responders were irrational, violently assertive, and anti-public employee. Yet on a *person-to-person* level, two-thirds reported their dealings with public employees and officials as satisfactory. White ascribed that to the political situation in Chicago, and it would be inaccurate to draw too many parallels to today's situations.

As further evidence of this paradox, however, let me mention the *Psychology Today* article of June 1975, which reported that Americans were speaking favorably on their personal dealings with government employees. In fact, complete satisfaction with public offices' problem solving was reported by nearly 70 percent. *Very* satisfied were 43 percent. So firmly fixed were their prejudices, however, that they simply decided their successful experiences were the exception, not the rule.

Further, I am encouraged by reports from that 1973 Harris Survey for the Senate Subcommittee, which also found that 9 in every 10 "expressed the cardinal article of faith that government can be made to work efficiently and effectively."

It seems to me that high hopes for and idealism about the public service are seen in those same poll figures. For example, you will recall that more than half listed a desire to help people as an important quality in government workers.

A noted public opinion expert said recently, "It's the system that people distrust; this is seen in the polls which rate institutions low, but the individual government workers high."

Why is this encouraging? In this imperfect world, our success at changing systems is somewhat greater than our success at changing people.

Our Response to the Criticism

Today we have the opportunity to change the systems. That is what we are presently about in the Federal Personnel Management Project. We are modernizing the civil service system. As I noted earlier, the continuing low regard for the public service demands response. This is our response. We intend to improve the system so that managers and employees are encouraged, working in an atmosphere that supports and nurtures competence. Equally important, we intend to keep the public fully informed on this effort.

Over this past summer, task forces worked at high pitch to research nine major personnel "action areas" and to develop proposals to streamline the systems.

Federal employees, along with private industry and members from academia, made up the task forces. Certainly they drew on earlier reorganization studies, but I would

emphasize that we don't regard reorganization as a Washington event.

We Commissioners—Vice Chairman Jule Sugarman, Commissioner Ersa Poston, and I—have visited 12 cities across the United States to talk with Federal agency managers, employees, union and EEO leaders, and State and local government people.

Eighty-seven percent of all Federal employees work outside of Washington, so the first-hand information we received across the country during our visits—and later by mail—has been very useful.

Each of the task forces produced an option paper consisting of a review of the topic and problem, along with an array of options for future directions.

We expect draft proposals for President Carter's consideration to result in many system improvements. Some changes contemplated require only a revised Executive order or regulation. Others will need legislation, others a Presidential Reorganization Plan.

Thus, better service via streamlined effective governmental systems is the purpose of reorganization. But in the process, we hope to direct the Federal service toward meeting the high ideals Americans have for their public service.

To illustrate, let me discuss some of the major issues that cut across task force lines, issues that bear directly on service improvement:

Productivity.

Employee motivation.

Accountability of managers.

Productivity

To take the first, productivity, unless measures of output—of service sector productivity—can be developed, we will, in my estimation, never quiet the arguments over the quality of public sector activity. The demand remains, and rightfully so, for evidence that the public service sector is trying to control costs and improve services.

I would note, further, the seemingly universal feeling that business is more adept than government when it comes to keeping the organization solvent, productive, and honest.

Not true in all instances, but some parts of the private enterprise system do work better than comparable parts of the government system. With this reorganization we want the flexibility to adopt the best of corporate managerial practice. Obviously there are things we cannot do, things that we wouldn't want to do. But we can at least look for a substitute for private sector bonus systems, for example.

Currently, we do have a pay policy to reward high performance and penalize low performance. But that system is not working properly.

So we're debating an array of options to tie pay to performance —effectively.

We might give supervisors more authority to reward employees, based on their work, and deny those automatic pay increases when employees don't work.

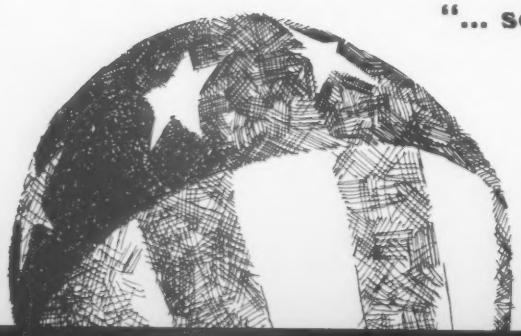
Employee Motivation

As for employee motivation, one traditional tool is the performance rating. But today, performance evaluation has become a ritual, has become ritualized to the point of ineffectiveness. All too often it is carried out in cursory fashion, and only in deference to the law.

Under the current Federal performance appraisal program, 98 percent of all employees receive satisfactory ratings; many who deserve more go unrecognized; and many who perform marginally or worse are not identified. Again, complication enters: An outstanding rating requires that all aspects of an employee's performance be outstanding, and nearly everybody has an Achilles' heel, and an unsatisfactory rating requires the employee's removal under adverse action procedures, which is more than some managers want to get into.

Here are some of the ideas we are currently debating as solutions.

One option would establish a performance appraisal program that aims only to maintain and improve employee performance on the present job and to strengthen employee-supervisor relationships. It would not muddy the waters by trying to put an adjective label of unsatisfactory-satisfactory-outstanding on an employee, or by trying to rate an employee's readiness for promotion. What it would do is give employees an annual report on their overall job performance, and seek to promote a high standard of individual productivity.



"... some parts of the private enterprise system do work better than comparable parts of the government system"

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Another option would acknowledge and reward satisfactory performance and identify marginal performance, but it wouldn't stop there. Evaluation review committees would be set up by each agency to do something constructive about marginal performance. Committees would have the clout to recommend that marginal employees be reassigned, fired, retained in the same position, or have their jobs downgraded.

Under another option, at least one performance level would be added to the current unsatisfactory-satisfactory-outstanding hierarchy. The added level suggested is "marginal," and two successive marginal ratings would be the basis for an unsatisfactory rating—it would serve as due notice to the employee to shape up or get ready to be shipped out.

Accountability of Managers

The interdependence of quality government and quality managerial leadership continues to be a priority item in our reorganization drive. One newspaper has rightly termed our Executive Service plan the linchpin of personnel reorganization.

The public sees the top of the system as being overloaded with senior officials who are there simply because they have outlasted everyone else, who are so entrenched in their positions that they have turned to stone on the job, and who, like stone, are unchangeable and immovable until retirement, death, and other "acts of God" haul them away.

I find that the public's perception is by no means the rule, but there are instances where the perception matches reality. These few positions at the top have such profound influence over the efforts of the total Federal work force that even a few ineffective executives are too many. We have to change both the perception and the reality, and we have to do it fast. That is why this subject is being given priority attention in the reorganization.

The system will change, it must change. We must have a system where people rise to the top of the service only if they belong there, and stay at the top only if they continue to *prove* they belong there. It must be every bit as accountable a world as the public perceives the executive suite of corporate management to be.

There are several ways in which the present system can be changed, several models of managerial practice from which to choose the best features in building the kind of executive managerial service the government needs. We will consider no approach too radical. Maybe tenure based on performance is the way to go, with some guarantee of fallback to a nonmanagerial position (but not a *specific* position) if the performance is inadequate. Or initial entry into the executive ranks might be made subject to meeting set criteria of managerial capability.

We also want to make it possible for career people to have a crack at the really top jobs, those for which they are now rarely considered—proving their entitlement in competition with noncareer appointees.

Time for a Change

There are many ways to tackle the whole personnel situation—

"We must have a system where people rise to the top of the service only if they belong there, and stay at the top only if they continue to prove they belong there."

and we have not foreclosed on any of them. But one idea rules our reorganization planning, and that is, it *is* time for a change. It is time to say there is room at the top for the men and women who have the ability, determination, and ambition to earn a place there . . . and then to earn the right to keep it.

Such, then, is some of the substance of our reply to public doubts about the public service. The very existence of the reorganization drive, and the resulting improvement of government, should go far in assuaging public mistrust of government service and government workers as a group.

We are doing our part. We are working to upgrade government. We are continuing to make every effort to communicate our progress. This communication drive is already underway. As each option paper went out for comment, it was released to the press with full briefings.

I would reckon that the inches of newspaper space, and the hours

"The very existence of the reorganization drive, and the resulting improvement of government, should go far in assuaging public mistrust of government service and government workers as a group."

"...I would hope to see acceptance of public employees and the public service in place of vilification."

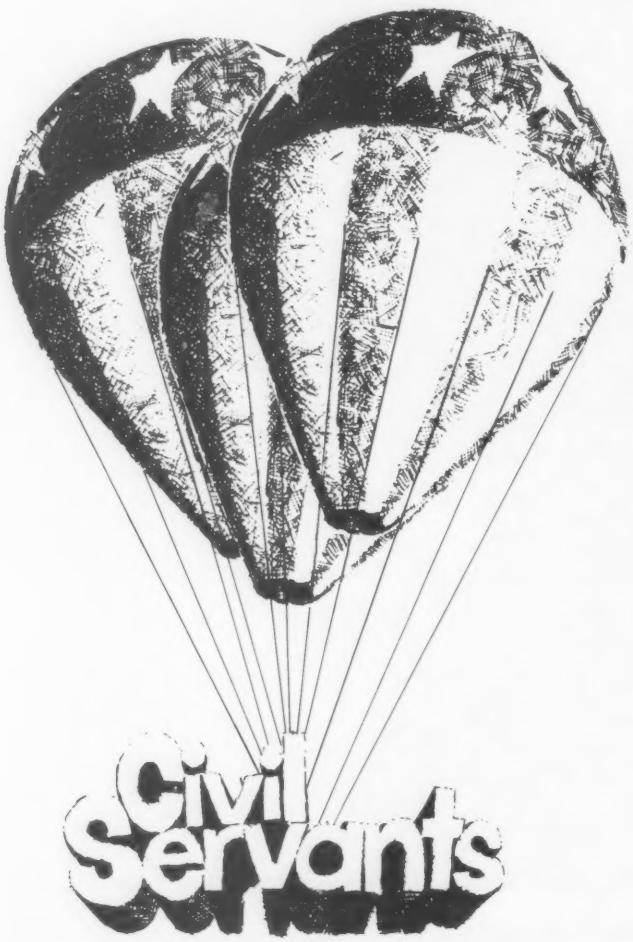
of television and radio time, already add up to a "first"—the first time a wave of *positive* news about the public service has gone up against the endless tides of negative news about the public service.

Meanwhile, I would hope for a response from government managers who can help to make a difference in the public's perception of public employees. Government managers can do this by example, by the pride in public service that they inspire in their employees.

I would hope for a positive understanding and support of our effort to reorganize the personnel system. I would hope that you who are "in the know" will feel obliged to correct the myths and half truths about the public service.

Most of all, I would hope to see acceptance of public employees and the public service in place of vilification.

If this happens, the nation as a whole will benefit from a better return on the $45 billion public investment in the Federal payroll.



INTERGOVERNMENTAL PERSPECTIVES

Update on Indian Tribal Governments and the IPA

In ceremonies last September, Francis Yanak, CSC's San Francisco regional director, presented special awards to two western governors, thus marking the realization of a unique concept in Commission assistance to Indian tribal governments.

Governors Raul Castro of Arizona and Mike O'Callaghan of Nevada received the Commission's Special Citation for Distinguished Citizens for administration of Intergovernmental Personnel Act activities in their States. Their support is credited with the success of a new intern program for native Americans that in its brief existence has given every indication of lasting impact.

When the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act was enacted in January 1975, Indian tribal governments became eligible for the first time to participate in IPA programs. This includes grants and technical help in personnel management, plus intergovernmental mobility assignments. In the 3 years since the law was signed, such governments have in fact begun to participate fully in these programs.

But CSC's San Francisco office decided to go beyond the traditional forms of IPA help, and devised an original. With funding from HEW's Office of Native American Programs (ONAP), San Francisco set up the prototype Native American Personnel Management Intern Program.

Regional office staff designed the program to give interns first-hand experience and on-the-job training in personnel management. They wanted to insure that interns not only picked up essential personnel skills, but perhaps more important, acquired the background to improve tribal personnel systems. From the outset, it was stipulated that interns completing assignments return to their tribes or tribal associations to share their new knowledge.

The first step in launching the new program was to set up an advisory committee composed of representatives of the Inter-Tribal Councils of Arizona, California, and Nevada; the Navajo Nation; the California Tribal Chairmen's Association; and, on the Federal side, of officials from the Phoenix and Sacramento area offices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Western Federal Regional Council Indian Advisory Committee, and the Commission's Intergovernmental Personnel Programs Division.

This advisory group was crucial to the program's success. It considered nearly all aspects of the program—from selection, compensation, and training of interns to a tribe's ability to handle its workload during an intern's absence. As a result of the group's deliberations, it was decided that interns would receive full salary while on assignment, 75 percent to be paid by the Commission under its contract with ONAP, and 25 percent by the employing tribal government. Evaluation would assess impact of the internships on post-training performance. And selection criteria were adapted, within a merit framework, to the special needs of the program.

The first three interns began their 8-month assignments in September 1976. They were Franklin Yazzie, Director of Public Service Employment for the Navajo Nation; Orlando Manuel, Personnel Director for the Gila River Indian Community; and Dora Garcia, Office Manager for the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada. With the cooperation of Governors Castro and O'Callaghan, Garcia trained in the Nevada State Personnel Department, and Yazzie and Manuel in the Arizona State Personnel Department.

State personnel trained the interns in employment and staffing, position and pay management, employee relations, training and development, and records and reports. Interns also attended classes in personnel management.

In May 1977, Yazzie, Manuel, and Garcia completed their assignments and received diplomas in the offices of their respective governors. All three have returned to their tribal governments to put their new knowledge into practice.

The Native American Personnel Management Intern Program started small—three interns, after all, can't have a widespread impact. But the idea itself is spreading. The three other Commission regions with large native American populations—Denver, Dallas, and Seattle—are all starting intern programs of their own. And the San Francisco program, of course, will go on, with the continuing support and commitment of the governors of Arizona and Nevada.

What started as an idea to broaden the scope of IPA assistance to a special target group is growing into a steady effort to help improve tribal government organization. This process of growth, according to Frank Yanak, marks "a new era of cooperative efforts between the U.S. Civil Service Commission and Indian governments."

Update on Mobility Assignments: 1,000 Trade Jobs

During the past year, more than 1,000 government and other employees had temporary job assignments under provisions of the IPA mobility program administered by CSC.

A former astronaut is advising a governor. A registered nurse is helping investigate Medicaid fraud. And a veteran diplomat is teaching at a university.

These three individuals are among those who went on temporary job assignments in Fiscal Year 1977.

The IPA mobility program authorizes the detail of Federal executive agency personnel to States, local governments, institutions of higher education, and Indian tribal governments. It also provides for the detail of personnel from States, local governments, institutions of higher education, and Indian tribal governments to Federal executive agencies. In the 6 years the mobility program has operated, some 4,000 such exchanges have been made.

According to CSC Chairman Alan K. Campbell, "This is a program where everyone can benefit—the temporary employers get expert staff help, the permanent employers get returning workers with broadened experience, and the employees themselves enhance their own professional development."

The program enables governments to "borrow" and "lend" talent for up to 2 years. Since 1971, 2,641 State, local, tribal, and academic employees, and 1,965 Federal employees, have gone on such assignments. Over 40 Federal agencies, 350 local governments, 400 colleges and universities, and 30 tribal governments have participated, as well as all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Samoa, and the Virgin Islands.

Russell Schweickart, the former astronaut, is assigned from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to the State of California, where he is Assistant to the Governor for Science and Technology.

The registered nurse was one of 10 State and local government workers assigned to the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to investigate Medicaid fraud in Colorado. The investigators uncovered some instances of malpractice in the $50-$100,000 range, and, as a result, several indictments have been made—the first ever obtained in the State for Medicaid fraud.

And veteran diplomat John Armitage, who recently completed several years as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs and who served in Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, the Soviet Union, and Iran, is on loan from the Department of State to the University of Virginia's Department of Government and Foreign Affairs.

Other assignments made during the past year include:

Walter Wetzel, former Chairman of the Blackfoot Tribe, who went from the U.S. Department of Labor to the Montana Employment Security Commission to help identify job opportunities for that State's Indian population.

Lt. Thomas White of the New York City Fire Department who began developing college programs for the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration's National Academy for Fire Prevention and Control.

Charles Swain, Professor of Religion at Florida State University, who with his family is living in NASA's House of the Future to demonstrate the contributions of aerospace technology to the construction industry. (See box for his story.)

As before, most assignments in 1977 involved management, science and technology, education, or social science jobs. The four Federal agencies continuing to use the mobility program most were HEW, Agriculture, Labor, and Housing and Urban Development.

The number of mobility assignments in 1977 was greater than in any previous year and topped 1976 by 25 percent. But according to Norman Beckman, Director of the Commission's Bureau of Intergovernmental Personnel Programs, "We have just begun to tap the program's full potential. The Commission is now working with a number of national organizations to establish a special mobility clearinghouse to enable even more governments and universities to take advantage of the program."

And major Federal agencies have taken steps to expand and strengthen the mobility program. Each designated a key individual to serve as coordinator, and each will initiate or improve its monitoring and evaluation.

For information on how the mobility program can help you, contact the U.S. Civil Service Commission, Bureau of Intergovernmental Personnel Programs, Washington, D.C. 20415. —*Susan Tejada*

Home, Sweet Tripolymer-Insulated Home

Some mobility assignments are ordinary, some out of the ordinary. Charles Swain's mobility assignment is both. He is working in the present and the future at the same time.

One part of Swain's assignment, which began in August 1977, is to develop training programs for

employees of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va. The other part—the unique part—is to live with his family as guinea pigs in NASA's House of the Future.

Home for a year is the so-called Technology Utilization House at Langley, a cozy little Tripolymer-insulated structure that applies space-age technology to home design. Swain's experiment in futuristic living will help demonstrate the feasibility of using spinoff technology from the aerospace program to advance the construction industry.

The energy-saving and safety features of Tech House include solar collectors to heat space and water, solar cells to convert light into electricity, fireplace heat recovery, interior wall studs made from reconstituted sawdust, toilet flush water from recycled wash water, light bulb savers, tornado detectors, and exterior rolling shutters. Such an energy-efficient house could save an owner about $20,000 over a 20-year period.

The Tech House garage is filled with machinery to measure how much use an average family will make of special devices in the house, and how well the devices perform. Instruments record each time the Swains cook a meal, turn on the heat, build a fire, take a shower, or flick a light switch.

Swain, Professor of Religion at Florida State University, his wife, who is a nurse, and their two children were selected for the experiment because, according to Langley technical manager Fred Bowen, "We wanted a nontechnical type of family." Swain's assignment was arranged under the auspices of the American Council on Education's Governmental Fellows Program.

During his year at Langley, Swain is working for the Langley Center's Training and Educational Services Branch as an employee development specialist. He is using his experience in counseling and curriculum development to set up training programs in career counseling for managers and supervisors, and to prepare recommendations for establishing a learning resource center for graduate students, apprentice workers, and disadvantaged employees at Langley.

For these 12 months, in fact, Swain will be a NASA man through and through, both on the job and off.

For information on Tech House, contact the Technology Utilization Office, Mail Stop 139A, NASA, Langley Research Center, Hampton, Va. 23665 (phone 804/827-3281).

a call for development of both the system and the women in it

WORKING FOR AUNT SAM

by Ersa H. Poston
Commissioner
U.S. Civil Service Commission

I AM CONVINCED that women and minorities, indeed all people, bear a responsibility for their own development.

But I am also convinced that social systems bear a responsibility. The thinking and planning for Federal personnel reorganization are taking this responsibility into account.

The Past

It seems to me that on topics of equal employment and equity there's an element in this country that likes to inform women and minorities of all the progress they've made. Although I do not propose to join the chorus and sing that song, I do think it would be useful to set the current situation of women in the Federal service in some historic perspective.

It is fair to say that we *have* progressed beyond the earliest days of the nation when women in Government jobs were a novelty. In fact, women in any jobs at all outside the home were a novelty.

And don't think that women were satisfied with the situation even back then. In 1848, at the first "women's rights" convention in Seneca Falls, N.Y., they issued a hard-hitting Declaration of Sentiments. In this document, they charged that man had monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, left to woman only those of scanty remuneration, closed against her all avenues of wealth and distinction, and denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education.

This male monopoly of gainful employment began to ease some-

what in the years that followed, but almost without exception the most that a woman could hope for was a low-paying clerkship. The Civil Service Act of 1883 changed all that by encouraging women to compete in many civil service examinations on the same basis as men. But it was also around this time that a tool got invented that changed the employment picture for women for some years to come. Many women came to rue the invention of this tool because the typewriter had as much to do with stereotyping women into traditional patterns of employment as did any overt act of policy or prejudice.

By the time the Classification Act of 1923 required that equal wages be paid for equal work in Government, regardless of sex, women were gaining some ground in the number of jobs they held. A grand total of 33 percent of all white-collar appointments made in fiscal 1923 went to women. But the Commission's annual report for that year carried the gloomy news that many examinations still included training or experience requirements that women, as a rule, were not yet able to meet. Not one woman was able to apply in examinations held for various engineering positions above the junior level.

It is a sad commentary on our system of values that the two world wars in this century did more than any legislation or executive act to open up a larger number and wider variety of jobs to women. The number of women in Government jobs increased more than three and one-half times during the first two years of World War II. And the decades that followed solidified the place of women in Federal employment.

"...it is indefensible to postpone equity for minorities and women to another generation."

The Present

Women now hold more than 42 percent of white-collar Government jobs. If you include blue-collar and postal occupations, women hold 30 percent of *all* Federal jobs. The percentage of women in the nation's entire labor force is still about 10 percent higher, however.

In the white-collar jobs, I think it is significant to note, women hold a whopping 77 percent in grades 1 through 4. They hold 60 percent of those in grades 5 through 8, but only 5 percent of the GS-14 and 15 group, and a meager 3 percent of the supergrades. The 34 percent in grades 9 through 13 is just barely a respectable showing.

We *can* do better; we *must* do better.

All members of this Civil Service Commission—Chairman Alan Campbell, Vice Chairman Jule Sugarman, and I—are committed to swift and thorough attention to affirmative action. We would count our terms as failures if we were not to engineer substantial progress in this area. We do not intend to fail.

The Future

Let me tell you where I am coming from:

Now is the time to act. It is not acceptable—indeed, it is indefensible—to postpone equity for minorities and women to another generation. Minorities and women cannot wait, and the country cannot wait. I am utterly and deeply convinced that this is the responsibility of our generation. We cannot and must not pass this torch to another gen-

eration with such feeble words as "we couldn't do it, but maybe you can!"

Systems and individuals must change. It seems that change advocates fall into two camps: self-improvement proponents on one side, and system-improvement proponents on the other. The former tells women and minorities that it is up to them to improve their education and their readiness to move ahead; the latter says that the system must change before the individual can change.

Not long ago, a New York *Times* article described a successful project based on the "self-improvement" concept. Margaret Hennig and Anne Jardim, the first women Ph.D.'s graduated from Harvard Business School, wrote a book called *The Managerial Woman*. They also conduct a seminar on this topic. Through interviewing and training thousands of women and men executives, they have spotted and analyzed the obstacles that women allow to block their career advancement.

As they put it: "The difference between us and the women's movement is that they say we have to make men change and we say we women have to change first." The article goes on to note that "the key differences hinge on lessons men absorb in team sports from their earliest years and carry automatically into the corporate world."

To women who would argue for altering the work environment to one that better reflects the values of *both* men and women, they advise: "Forget it." The article says: "It is going to be a long time before the men's world of business becomes anything like a people's place of work: only 2.3 percent of American executives earning $25,000 or more are women, and millions of them 'will spend an entire career life living and working in a culture whose traditions, rules, and implicit codes are derived from the male experience.' "

On the other side are the advocates for systems change. They see the individual as being at the mercy of the system. And they can marshal the arguments. Unfortunately, case histories of individuals who prepare themselves for careers they cannot fulfill are all too abundant.

In my view, both camps are right. That is to say, women do owe it to themselves to plot their careers wisely. I wholeheartedly agree with these practical suggestions from Hennig and Jardim for ambitious women:

—Accept leadership.

—Delegate authority.

—Work with everyone you need, whether you can stand them or not.

—Develop plans.

—Anticipate problems and have alternate solutions ready in advance.

—Take risks; the alternative is to do nothing, and that's a greater mistake.

—Don't take criticism personally; keep cool.

—Don't show emotion, and never cry in front of a male coworker.

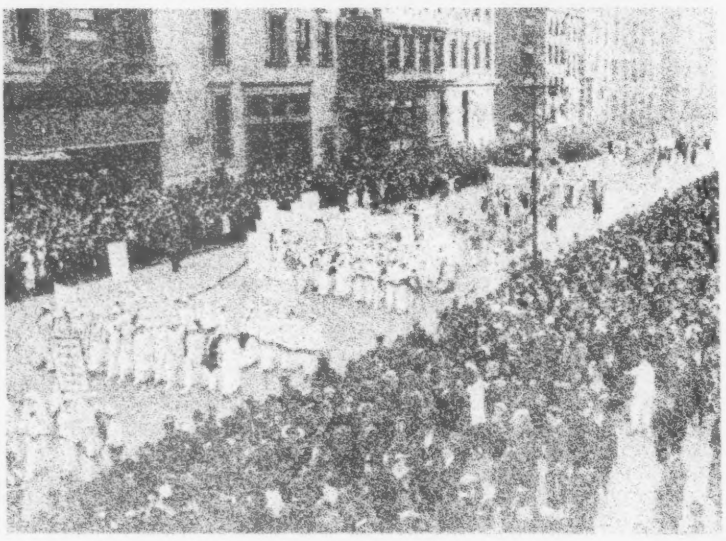
—Find a coach or mentor to guide you.

I would argue too that women have a responsibility to help change the system, thereby leaving an improved legacy to the next generation. A recent Federal Woman's Award winner, Joyce Walker of OMB, sounded that note. "Since I've been in Government," she said on winning the award, "I've come to know just how much we owe these Federal women just ahead of us—they cleared the way for us." She pledged to work for and pass on gains to the next wave of women in Government.

However, I would emphasize that individuals unto themselves are not omnipotent. We *do* live and work within systems.

As for changing systems: That is the aim, theme, and purpose of this new administration. And modernizing the civil service system is the aim of this slate of Civil Service Commissioners.

"...women have a responsibility to help change the system, thereby leaving an improved legacy to the next generation."



Let me mention some precepts we will bear in mind as we go about this.

Merit, EEO, and Affirmative Action

I would start with a few words about the merit system: what merit is and what it is not.

Merit *is* a body of laws, traditions, regulations, customs that represent an attempt to hire qualified people for Government jobs by taking extreme care to give all Americans a fair chance at those jobs. It is *not* a shibboleth, and must never serve as a shield for nonmeritorious personnel practices.

Merit is a matter, moreover, of emphasis and attitude. It should not serve so much as a way of screening out the lesser qualified as it is a way to discover and bring the able into public service, and to encourage their career development.

There is no conflict between affirmative action and the merit ideal; in fact, each supports the other.

To that, I'd like to add some comments on goals, quotas, and representativeness in the public service. It is against my best judgment to advocate the setting of quotas in hiring and promoting. I can tell you that, in my view, use of quotas brings on all kinds of fancy legalistic games playing to conform to the *letter* of the law or regulation, but not the spirit. A policy of tight quotas also overlooks factors such as individual choice in career preparation that strongly impact on the available labor supply for certain jobs. Through the use of *goals*, I would argue, we can emphasize the spirit and attitudinal changes we are attempting to foster, without neglecting the numbers.

Certainly, however, a long-run goal of our society is that all groups participate in *all* aspects of our national and local life in some proportion to their numbers.

Our goal for this administration is to improve our affirmative action programs. Particularly, we want to improve upward mobility, to increase the numbers of women and minorities in the upper grades. Remember, women have a "monopoly"—however undesired—on the jobs in the four lowest General Schedule grades. Bear in mind also that one-quarter of the jobs in these grades are filled by blacks and Hispanics. Add the fact that 80 percent of Federal job vacancies are filled from *within*, and it becomes evident that upward mobility is of prime importance in the Federal personnel system.

Within the Commission itself, we have adopted new measures to increase the number of minorities and women in key executive jobs, both in Washington and in the field. Already the Commission employs proportionately more women and minorities at most grade levels than is the case in most other agencies. But we must do better.

We are carrying forward strong affirmative action recruitment for managerial or key staff positions at GS-15 and above, as well as for the grade 13-15 levels, to reach candidates within and outside CSC. We are adding to our cadre of high-quality talent by setting up developmental positions in the 13-15 range, to prepare potential managers who are not quite qualified for managerial jobs now.

"...women have a 'monopoly' -however undesired- on the jobs in the four lowest General Schedule grades."

This is the kind of action called for to reach our goal of equity in the time allotted to our generation.

Equal employment opportunity and affirmative action is the topic of one of the nine task forces that make up the Federal Personnel Management Project, part of the President's reorganization effort. That task force is ably headed by Dr. Harriett Jenkins, Director of EEO for NASA. She has brought a world of experience as an equal rights innovator to her job.

Working at high pitch through the summer, the task force developed an option paper on possible improvements in laws and regulations.

The work of the EEO team and that of the task force on the staffing process are so closely related that the two option papers were presented as one.

This paper and several others were sent to Federal officials and other interested parties—such as unions and public interest groups—for comment. Our final proposals have gone to the President for his consideration.

At this point I cannot predict which suggestions the President will accept. But I can assure you that we will persevere in our drive to rebuild and modernize the civil service system so that it truly fulfills its aim to hire and promote on merit.

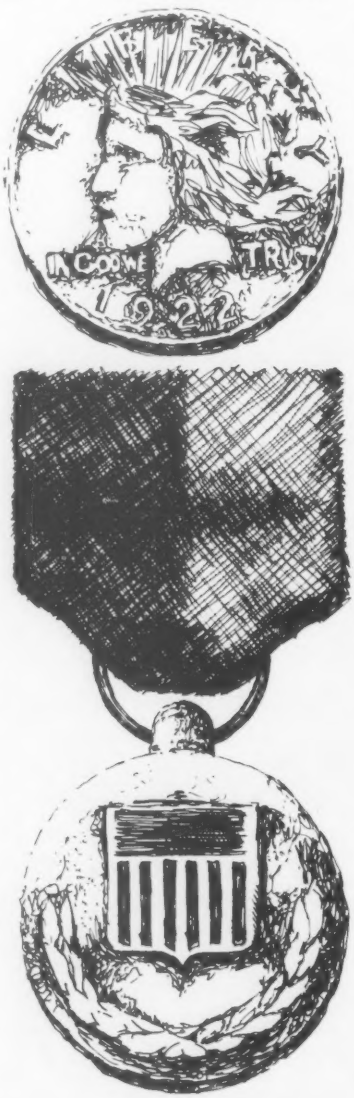
We do not propose to add a list of special benefits. Rather, we expect to *eliminate* the special benefits that have worked against women and minorities.

We are not in the business of bending or twisting the rules. It is our purpose to make the rules contribute to a system truly based on talent.

If we are able to make these changes, it is my hope that women and minorities will be ready, willing, and able to move with the new system—to work for self-development within the improved system. CSJ

DOLLARS AND INCENTIVES

by Richard Brengel
Director, Office of Incentive Systems
U.S. Civil Service Commission



FEDERAL MANAGERS have increasingly complex and demanding jobs. You are expected to increase productivity and reduce costs, to be experts in your fields, and to be responsive to national and organizational goals and objectives.

This is a tremendous challenge. It calls for full use of all your skills, abilities, and resources to maintain the delicate balance between: (1) mission accomplishment; (2) empathy for the rights, privileges, and expectations of your staffs; and (3) adherence to statutory and regulatory requirements.

It's not surprising, then, in the press of day-to-day business, that we sometimes overlook the "people" side of resource management. Yet it is people—our employees—who make the difference between success and failure of our operations, and upon which our performance as managers, indeed Government's performance, is judged.

Establishing the Right Climate

There is growing agreement among behavioral scientists that motivation includes: the work itself; responsibility; opportunities for achievement, growth, and advancement; and prompt recognition for good work.

If we are to increase productivity and improve morale, we must foster and encourage a team spirit. We must create a climate in which employees feel that their work is meaningful, that their ideas and achievements are needed.

Special recognition or reward for special effort is not new—it's part of our national heritage. If, by our attitude and actions, we demonstrate that employee ideas and achievements *will* be recognized promptly and fairly, we will have the climate needed to get the best results from our staff.

We shouldn't expect high performance as a matter of course—or as a credit to our good judgment in selecting competent employees. Even the worker gets discouraged and disinterested if his or her other work is not recognized.

There are many kinds of recognition we can give to employees—from informal, verbal commendations to formal awards and promotions.

☐ A commendation is particularly appropriate for employees who haven't been on the job long enough to warrant a cash award or pay increase. We can say it openly, or write it. A written commendation, of course, is a matter of record and should be placed in the employee's personnel file. Commendations, verbal or written, should not be kept a secret, but should be shared with other employees.

☐ Assigning an "Outstanding" rating is a significant form of recognition since it indicates an evaluation of outstanding *for each factor making up the total job*. And when we discuss performance with our employees, this is a good time to tell them they can help the organization by contributing their ideas. If we can point out obstacles to smooth operation of the unit, we've gone a long way toward getting employees to think constructively about solutions to the problems.

☐ Promotion is, of course, the highest form of recognition for superior work. But promotion isn't always possible, so we must look for other ways to recognize deserving employees.

The Tools

The Federal Incentive Awards program is designed to help recognize good work that behavioral scientists agree is important to motivation. Under the program's provisions we have authority to:

—Grant cash recognition to reinforce and publicly recognize performance beyond job responsibilities, and thus encourage other employees.

"... those who have top approval authority for awards must ensure equity of recognition..."

—Grant awards for suggestions, inventions, superior accomplishments, or other personal efforts.

We have a distinct advantage over private industry. The Federal awards program is comparatively progressive, providing for both honorary and cash recognition to encourage exemplary performance. And cash awards may be as high as $25,000.

While awards programs vary, certain elements are common. For example, a typical agency program includes:

—One or more levels of honorary recognition—usually medals or plaques accompanied by a certificate—for longer term, career-oriented achievements or acts of heroism.

—Cash awards or an extra within-grade increase for performance beyond normal job requirements.

—Cash awards for suggestions or inventions.

—Agency participation in external awards programs through which private organizations recognize outstanding Federal employees.

—Emblems for completing specified years of service.

We Have the Ball

As responsible Federal managers, we can't afford to sit back and let someone else take the initiative. It's part of our responsibility to know how to use awards properly. We are responsible for implementing the policies and the program as stated by law, regulation, and agency directives. Depending upon our job, we may have various roles to play, for example:

☐ As a rating or evaluating official: We should thoroughly and carefully assess employee performance, or evaluate suggestions; be completely fair and honest in our appraisals; and not be influenced by irrelevant factors.

☐ As a reviewing official: We must ensure that award recommendations we approve are both objective and factual, and that all criteria are met.

☐ As an approving official: We must ensure that award recommendations are factual and fair, even though already signed by subordinates. And since approval usually results in spending appropriated funds, we must be sure that the performance or suggestion contribution resulted in tangible benefits or exceeded normal requirements enough to justify the amount of award, or other recognition, recommended.

In addition, those who have top approval authority for awards must ensure equity of recognition. Supervisors often don't view cash awards and recognition the same way. So approving officials need to be aware of the frequency and type of recognition being granted within their area of responsibility, and how those figures compare with agency and Government-wide averages.

Gilbert and Sullivan fans will recall the ditty "let the punishment fit the crime!" If we apply the parallel, and make the recognition fit the contribution, we'll have the key to effective use of awards. Two key questions to ask, before recommending awards, are:

Does the recognition fit the contribution?

Is the recognition meaningful to the employee?

Incentive awards provide for many types and levels of recognition, but these divide into two basics—honor and cash. Both can motivate. But recognition that motivates one employee will not always motivate another.

As Federal managers, we may grant:

—Lump-sum cash awards for sustained superior performance to employees who exceed normal requirements.

—Quality pay increases to eligible employees who substantially exceed requirements in all major aspects of their jobs.

—Within-grade increases to employees who meet an acceptable level of competence. OR (don't forget this one):

—Withhold within-grade increases from employees whose work is unacceptable.

Whatever recognition is chosen, it will have its greatest impact when it follows closely the action being recognized. The awardee then feels that his or her extra efforts really are being recognized, and coworkers see more clearly both the connection between performance and reward and the justice in recognizing that person.

Another key purpose of the awards program is to encourage employees to participate in improving Government economy and efficiency. Awards should be granted when merited, regardless of the employee's grade level or responsibility.

Creating Opportunities for Recognition

Beyond these award possibilities you have other opportunities to identify and recognize deserving employees and groups.

You can use your management reviews to identify program areas or organizational units that produce superior results. Any time there has been a significant contribution beyond job responsibilities, either as a one-time occurrence, or over an extended period, recommend an award.

"We must create a climate in which employees feel their work is meaningful, that their ideas and achievements are needed."

Group recognition encourages group commitment. And group awards ensure that each member contributing to an accomplishment receives some recognition.

We can further encourage a productive organization by recognizing subordinate supervisors who get worthwhile suggestions and high-level performance from their staffs. This recognition should be based upon their role in motivating employees.

Capitalizing on Recognition Given

To help make the incentive awards program effective in encouraging other employees to make similar contributions, give careful thought to *how* awards are presented. The level of the presentation, involvement of supervisors and peers in the ceremony, public statements of why the employee's contribution merited recognition (including its impact on the organization), and appropriate publicity are important.

Above all, be aware that our credibility is on view at these award ceremonies, and that our actions demonstrate our true feelings on the value of the awards. If you grant awards for adequate reasons, then publicly state those reasons. If you mean what you say about the awards program, your sincerity and enthusiasm will be obvious to employees.

Get extra mileage by publicizing awards. Work with awards program administrators and public affairs staffs to ensure that the "awards story" gets the publicity it deserves—internally through the house organ or bulletin board, externally through news media, professional organizations, and alumni associations.

A well-written article on employee achievements can strengthen the image of the Federal work force, particularly when measurable benefits are spelled out.

Maintaining Credibility

There is no doubt that incentive awards, properly used, can motivate individuals and groups to achieve their greatest potential. But awards, to be effective, must be administered with integrity. We know from experience how counter-productive, even destructive, incentives can be if used improperly.

You've got to work constantly at maintaining your credibility, reinforcing your support of the program by actively participating in promotional campaigns, awards ceremonies, and publicity efforts.

Avoid such pitfalls as:

—Not giving certain outstanding employees awards.

—Rewarding only one individual when the contribution resulted from the work of many.

—Waiting until an employee is leaving the organization before recognizing him or her.

—Putting suggestions at the bottom of the "in" box instead of evaluating them promptly.

—Incorrectly or inappropriately using recognition.

—Implying favoritism in granting awards.

Our investment of time and interest in incentive awards can pay valuable and continuing dividends in terms of mission accomplishment, economy, improved employee morale, and personal satisfaction from knowing that we are managing our employees well. It just makes good sense for managers to use this available and proven resource.

Support From the Top

A few months ago, history was made in a White House ceremony when the President presented the highest cash award that can be given under the awards program—$25,000. It went to a Federal employee for the invention of a simple device now used in steam-powered ships. It will save the Navy more than $10 million a year in fuel and maintenance costs.

A remark made by the President at that time has special significance for all Federal managers. He said that civil servants *are not recognized often enough*. We have to ensure that in the future they get the recognition they are due.

CSJ

THE AWARDS STORY

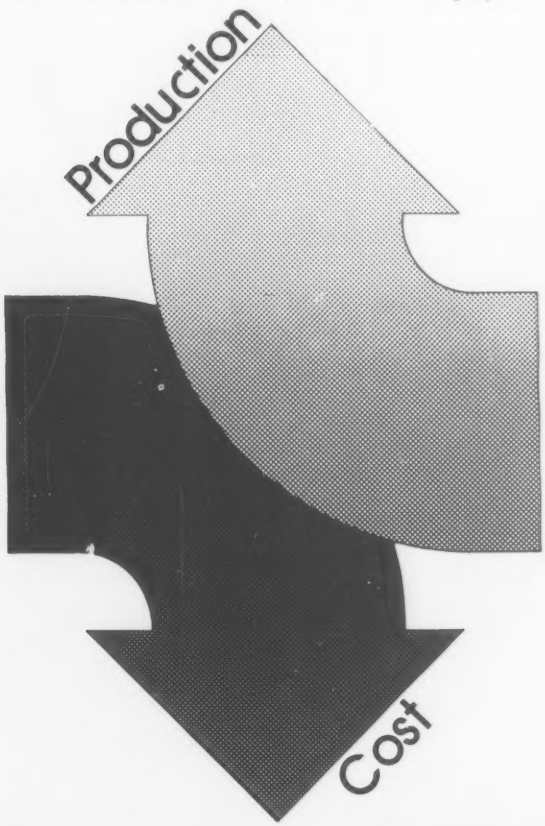
$333 Million Saved;
Suggestions *Do* Work

This is when we become embroiled in the inevitable, annual income-tax forms. We all see the need for it, but few, if any, enjoy it. And while most feel that Uncle Sam is taking too big a bite out of our paychecks, we also tend to shrug our shoulders and say there's nothing *we* can do about it.

Wrong. There *is* something we can do about it. You may be guilty of sitting on potential savings of thousands of dollars to the taxpayer.

None of us would willingly ignore thousands of dollars. Yet every day, potential savings to the Government remain neglected, shuffled to the bottom of in-boxes.

Where are these savings and how can this happen when the President has asked all Federal employees to become personally involved in reducing Government costs and improving services?



Potential savings and improvements are in the thousands of suggestions that remain unevaluated each year. The longer these potential savings sit in somebody's in-box waiting to be evaluated, the more it costs the taxpayer.

Why are employee suggestions assigned such low priority?

Since Federal employees are taxpayers themselves, they should be eager to approve any document that could reduce costs or improve Government services and save their (the taxpayers') money.

Clerks and secretaries, one would think, would assign short deadlines to suggestions, and follow up to assure that suggestions keep appearing on *top* of the in-box so that these deadlines are met.

One would also think that those who can say "yes" to suggestions would be particularly interested in evaluating them quickly in order to keep on top of good ideas.

Most departments and agencies have long-standing requirements for answering mail. Deadlines, sometimes as short as 2 or 3 days for White House or Congressional mail, are established despite numerous clearances and often top-level signature. And most routine mail is answered within a couple of weeks. If this can be done, why can't we evaluate suggestions promptly? We go through the same process for suggestions—read it, evaluate the content, prepare a reply—frequently with fewer levels of review and concurrence and lower level signature requirements.

There may be valid reasons for not evaluating certain suggestions right away. The evaluator may need to conduct a test or subject the suggestion to a trial period. Research of one kind or another may need to be done. These things understandably take time, and the delay can be explained to an employee who sincerely believes he or she has the idea of the century.

But there is no reason to delay the average employee suggestion—most of us just procrastinate. CSC Guidelines in FPM Chapter 451 state that most suggestions should be decided on within 30 days, in 60 days if they require higher level approval, and in 90 days when a field office needs Washington headquarters approval.

Tips for Faster Suggestion Processing

—Give line managers authority to approve awards up to a certain amount rather than delay action by convening a committee to make each decision.

—Designate a staff member "suggestion coordinator" and make him or her responsible for keeping records on suggestions.

—Set targets, goals, and deadlines, and follow up to make sure your requirements are met.

—Avoid multiple handling. Insist that suggestions be evaluated only by officials who can adopt the idea.

—Include in your staff meetings a chart showing your organization's status on suggestions—how many received, evaluated, and adopted; how much savings resulted; and *how many await evaluation.* These statistics will show which part of the group is doing the job and which part needs to improve.

—Insist that supervisors and managers fulfill their incentive awards responsibilities as part of any award consideration *they* may be given. It's an important element of a supervisor's or manager's job to increase productivity by reducing costs and improving performance. Those who ignore potential savings by failing to act promptly on employee suggestions and other contributions are *not* doing their job.

Last year, tangible benefits to the Government resulting from employee contributions totaled $333 million. In the 23 years of the Government-wide incentive awards program, tangible benefits have exceeded $4.5 billion.

Maybe you don't think the suggestion program in your agency has much value. It does, if you support it and encourage your staff to do the same. Maybe some of the suggestions you have seen or will be asked to evaluate come nowhere near saving the Government thousands of dollars. But you never know until you've read and evaluated them.

And the record shows that one out of every four suggestions *is* adopted, so it's worth the time.

—Edith A. Stringer

Feedback CSJ Point

In the October/December 1977 issue of the *Civil Service Journal,* Frank L. Schmidt concluded:

1. "...that tests are as fair to blacks as they are to whites."
2. That tests are similarly fair to women and Hispanics.
3. That the Federal Government should discontinue the requirement for test fairness studies, especially for blacks.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission states:

"The term 'test' includes all formal, scored, quantified or standardized techniques of assessing job suitability including, in addition to the above, specific qualifying or disqualifying personal history or background requirements, specific educational or work history requirements, scored interviews, biographical information blanks, interviewers' rating scale, scored application forms, etc."

I think the record will show that little, if any, evidence exists to justify general conclusions about the validity or fairness of tests as defined above.

While there is some evidence of equal validity and fairness with respect to written tests, it is clear that the overwhelming preponderance of such evidence was derived from a rather restricted selection of jobs that do not represent the universe of jobs in which employment is sought. Schmidt has reviewed and reanalyzed some of the data underlying some of the evidence, which presumably formed the basis for his conclusions. However, some of the same data used by Schmidt were reviewed and reanalyzed by Katzell and Dyer, *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 1977, pp. 137-145, who concluded that the data were insufficient to form a basis for concluding that tests are equally valid for all ethnic groups. They also recommended that differential validity be continuously investigated so as to increase the probability that selection procedures do not produce unfair discrimination.

The suggestion that the Federal Government should cease participation in trying to find solutions to an unresolved controversy surrounding important social phenomena in order to avoid ridicule seems hardly justified by any standards.

Tommy Shaw
Personnel Research Psychologist
Library of Congress

Mr. Shaw's reply does not necessarily reflect Library of Congress policy.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to respond to Mr. Shaw's comments. Many of the sentiments expressed in his reply to my article on tests and minority groups are very widespread today and deserve to be seriously addressed.

First, let me say that it was not the very broad definition of "test" contained in the EEOC Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures that I was addressing in my earlier article. The statements made and the conclusions reached in that article apply to employment tests defined in the narrower, more traditional sense: written tests of cognitive skills. Examples included tests of arithmetic reasoning, reading comprehension, mechanical ability, spatial ability, abstract reasoning, perceptual speed, and nonverbal reasoning ability—that is, tests psychologists normally think of as aptitude or ability tests. (In connection with the general question of how tests should be defined, I think it should be noted that EEOC has no scientific status. It is a Government agency and thus its definitions, whatever their legal status, have no particular scientific standing.)

Being a member of the board of editors of the *Journal of Applied Psychology,* I am well aware of the Katzell-Dyer article that Mr. Shaw refers to. I have not only carefully read this study, but along with Dr. John E. Hunter of Michigan State University, I have prepared a critique setting forth in detail the severe statistical problems that plague this study and completely undermine the Katzell-Dyer conclusions on differential validity. (Their conclusions on single group validity were identical to those in my *Civil Service Journal* article and to those contained in an earlier research study of mine published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology.)* This critique has been accepted for publication by the *Journal of Applied Psychology* and will appear sometime next spring. In my *CS Journal* article I mentioned the fact that, on the matter of differential validity (which is not the same as test unfairness), there was still some lingering controversy; I was referring to this exchange.

Mr. Shaw's statement that "the overwhelming preponderance of such evidence [that tests are racially fair] was derived from a rather restricted selection of jobs that do not represent the universe of jobs" is simply false. The data available today on this question were derived from a wide variety of jobs, with respect to both occupational level and nature of duties and responsibilities. But more important, there is no logical or substantive scientific reason to expect that type of job would make any difference with respect to racial differences in validity or test fairness. (It is interesting to note that Mr. Shaw himself offers no such hypotheses or reasons.) On the contrary, for the reasons listed in my original article, there is every reason to expect that if new jobs are studied, the pattern of results will be pretty much the same as that obtained for the hundreds of jobs that have already been studied.

Perhaps without realizing it, Mr. Shaw is severely distorting the ordinary standards of scientific evidence. That there is virtually no research evidence for test unfairness and much evidence indicating tests are racially fair is not, to him, a sufficient basis for a conclusion. He would seemingly invoke the impossible standard that every existing job everywhere in the economy must be studied before any scientific generalizations can be reached. A rule of this sort, applied generally, would obviously eliminate the possibility of progress in any area of investigation.

The reason the question of racial fairness of conventional employment tests is an "unresolved controversy" is not because the scientific evidence is not clear—it is clear—but rather because of social and political forces that resist the obvious conclusion indicated by research results. If the question under investigation were less politically charged, one would be hard pressed to find anyone who would refuse to accept the weight of research evidence. It is well to recall the initial unaccepting public reaction to the discovery that the sun, not the earth, is the center of our solar system, or to the germ theory of disease and its spin-off—vaccinations, or to the theory of evolution, or to other scientific discoveries when first advanced. People resisted these scientific conclusions for years, even in the face of massive supporting evidence, because they contradicted deeply held social, political, and religious beliefs. It seems apparent that, as evidence continues to accumulate, the future will see a similar process of development with respect to this question.

Frank L. Schmidt
Personnel Research Psychologist, U.S. Civil Service Commission, and Adjunct Professor of Psychology, George Washington University

present situation,
administration proposals

ETHICS

by David Reich
Ethics Counsel
U.S. Civil Service Commission

THERE is a fundamental distinction between working for the Government and private industry. Private employees must be concerned about the profitability of the business in which they are engaged. The "bottom line" too often dictates conduct in the business world.

Government employees on the other hand owe a duty and responsibility to serve the people of the United States in the best manner they can. Profits are not their concern. Their private interests must at all times be subordinated to their official position.

As far back as the 4th Century B.C., the Greek dramatist Sophocles said that he had no use "for the man who sets private friendship above the public welfare." The concept is also contained in the Biblical admonition that no man may serve two masters (Matthew 6:24).

Do's and Don'ts

From the very inception of our Government the Congress has been concerned with such potential violations as bribery and the use of undue influence on Federal employees. There is a prohibition against a Federal employee acting as agent or attorney for a private party in prosecuting a claim against the United States Government while he or she is a Federal employee. There are post-employment restrictions against a former employee presenting a claim to the Federal Government on a matter with which the employee worked personally and substantially while in Government. These laws were

codified in 1962 in chapter 11 of title 18 of the U.S. Code, which contains sanctions of imprisonment and fine.

In 1965 President Johnson issued Executive Order 11222 prescribing standards of ethical conduct for officers and employees in the executive branch. Section 101 of the order states:

"Where government is based on the consent of the governed, every citizen is entitled to have complete confidence in the integrity of his government. Each individual officer, employee, or adviser of government must help to earn and must honor that trust by his own integrity and conduct in all official actions."

The order delegates to the Civil Service Commission the responsibility for giving body to the principles contained in the order and for general supervision of the program. It was pursuant to this authority that the Commission issued the regulations now found in part 735 of the Code of Federal Regulations. These regulations are the model for other departments and agencies of Government, and each agency is required to submit its regulations, and any changes, to the Commission for approval before they are issued in the Federal Register.

There are also specific conflict statutes that have been enacted by Congress for some Government agencies. For example, the Federal Power Commission Act prohibits its employees from holding shares in electric utilities and gas companies. FPC employees must sell any such stock they might own and are forbidden from buying such stock while employed.

These provisions are directed not only to the employee but also to the spouse, minor children, and any member of the employee's immediate household. It would cover the case of a mother-in-law who lived in the same house as the employee. As an aside, it might be easier for the employee to ask his mother-in-law to move out rather than demand that she furnish him the names of companies in which she may hold stock!

We have had some situations where a spouse has been unwilling to cooperate with the employee. An example that comes to mind is one in which the employee's wife held some stock that the employee himself was forbidden to retain. The spouse did not want to divest herself of the shares—she said she faced the dilemma of whether to have her husband resign or to divorce him. Perhaps "Dear Abby" solved her problem.

The Commission's regulations have specific prohibitions against outside work that might interfere with Government employment, against the misuse of Government property, and the use of official information for private interests. It would clearly be a violation for any employee to advise others to purchase shares in a corporation that the employee, by reason of inside information, has learned is about to be awarded a special license by the agency. This type of information can be divulged only through official channels so that no insider can profit by it either directly or indirectly.

Conflicts of Interest

Executive Order 11222 proscribes not only actual conflicts of interest but also apparent conflicts. Apparent conflicts are more subtle and not easy to define. Lunches paid for regularly by persons dealing with your agency and gifts to you or your family from such persons can and may lead to conflicts of interest. The normal defense is that these favors will not sway the employee's thinking or judgment. This is not the answer. It *might*. Federal employees must ever be conscious of the public and their duty to the public. To quote the Supreme Court, in *United States* v. *Mississippi Valley Generating Co.*,

364 U.S. 520, 549 (1961), the prohibition:

". . . is thus directed not only at dishonor, but also at conduct that tempts dishonor. This broad proscription embodies a recognition of the fact that an impairment of impartial judgment can occur in even the most well-meaning men when their personal economic interests are affected by the business they transact on behalf of the Government. To this extent, therefore, the statute is more concerned with what might have happened in a given situation than with what actually happened."

Another point of reference is House Concurrent Resolution 175, passed in 1958. It has been labeled "The Ten Commandments" for officers and employees in all branches of the Government. Two of its strictures for Government employees are most pertinent:

"1. Put loyalty to the highest moral principles and to country above loyalty to persons, party, or Government department.

* * * *

"5. Never discriminate unfairly by dispensing special favors or privileges to anyone, whether for remuneration or not; and never accept, for himself or his family, favors or benefits under circumstances which might be construed by reasonable persons as influencing the performance of his governmental duties."

Presidential Action

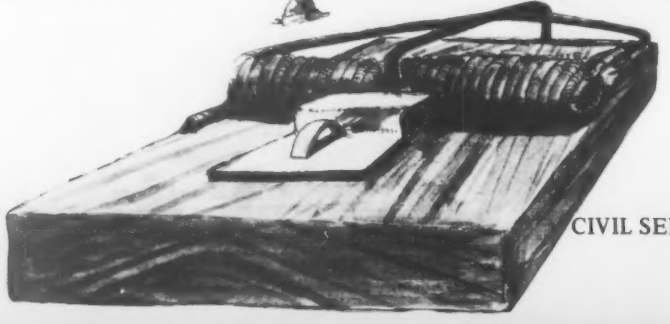
President Carter is fully committed to strengthening the ethics program in Government. Initially the President considered issuing an Executive order that would require public disclosure of Government employees' financial statements. In light of the Privacy Act, however, there were doubts as to whether this disclosure could be required through an Executive order. The President therefore presented legislation (H.R. 6954) to the Congress embodying three main provisions:

—*Financial disclosure:* H.R. 6954 proposes that elected and appointed officials and employees at the GS-16 level and above be required to file financial statements that would be available to the public. Statements would include all items of earned income over $100, all unearned income reported by categories of value, and all liabilities over $2,500. While public access to these statements is a new concept, the trend in recent years has been to uphold such a requirement.

—*Office of Government Ethics:* An Office of Government Ethics would be established within the Civil Service Commission headed by a Director to be appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Office would have broad powers of supervision over the ethics program administered in the other agencies.

—*Enlargement of post-employment provisions* presently contained in 18 U.S.C. 207.

Similar legislation has already passed the Senate (S. 555). Proposals before the House will probably be taken up this session. It is expected that a House bill will pass and that differences between it and S. 555 will be ironed out in conference for subsequent passage by both Houses of the Congress. If this schedule is followed, the legislation should become law during the first part of this year. CSJ



Institutional image: What is it? How does it affect your work and your agency's service to the public? Does it matter? It matters. And Robert Beynon, IPA Administrator with the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, tells why on this page.

All civil service systems large or small, urban or rural, cast a definable degree of imagery on the people they serve.

This portrait is not new. It can be recognized as a picture created in the minds of people over time. The presence of this imagery has greater importance than we wish to admit.

A civil service system portrait is constantly being received by community patrons who in turn are continually acting toward the system on the basis of imagery. Not on the basis of facts or figures.

Once a stereotype is allowed to form in the public mind, it is difficult to change. Such patterns serve as sieves that filter what is heard and observed. Images come in conflict with facts (or the lack of facts) and tend to assist in what is accepted or rejected.

Mirror, Mirror . . .

As a facade for the civil service system, all groups within the system must create and reflect an acceptable image; such a facsimile acts as a golden (or tarnished) halo to reflect the civil service system's personality pattern.

The image a person defines for a civil service system is the result of calculated experiences, recollections, and impressions. Such a collection, positive or negative, is transferred into perceptions regarding the jurisdictional civil service system.

There is reason to believe that this image is directly related to the degree of success the civil service system enjoys.

Since the success or failure of a civil service system depends upon reflections cast, and because these images are often translated into actions, the behavior that results needs careful analysis.

Investigation requires the determination of three important factors:

1. The direction of disposition reflected by the viewer (favorable or unfavorable).
2. The intensity of the view (weak or strong).
3. The importance of the view (salient or indifferent).

People Make a Difference

Whatever the reflections, a civil service system as a social institution takes on the same characteristics as the people who make up the system. Each person assumes a role and that role is perceived in many different ways by many other persons. Whether we're talking about people or institutions, they are positioned in social locations and behave in reference to expectations. From this pattern it logically follows that:

1. A civil service system behaves in some orderly fashion, not in a random manner.
2. A civil service system's behavioral modes are governed to some extent by the system's own expectations.
3. A civil service system's behavioral modes are governed by the expectations of the various groups making up its constituency.

A civil service system would be wise to assume a rare characteristic of mankind—the ability to put oneself in another's shoes. Or as the American Indian philosophy endorses: Do not criticize another man until you have walked in his moccasins. By either definition the characteristic to be sought is *empathy*.

As an aid in this task, a new technique called image research, scarcely two decades old, should be of assistance. The business world has used it effectively and with great impact. It has even led to legal recognition of corporate personalities. These reflections and perceptions have enabled businesses and corporations to be recognized as entities capable of suing and being sued.

Corporations can even be measured in terms of "goodwill" on a dollars-and-cents basis. This phenomenon exists in the business world, but since civil service systems are a "business," they too reflect images among their customers. A corporation has customers, stockholders, and a board of directors. A civil service system has employees, constituent voters, and a controlling board.

Does Your Image Measure Up?

In doing an image analysis of civil service, it helps to focus on the following questions:

1. Have the groups responsible for the civil service system agreed upon the image they wish to achieve?
2. Is enough "looking" and "listening" research being done to determine what the various publics think about the system?

3. Is follow-up consideration given to the overall program to assess the good and delete the bad?

4. Is time given to create internal harmony so that the external support is assured?

5. Are the above incorporated into both short- and long-term program objectives? Continuity is a factor important to creating continuous goodwill and support among constituent groups.

These five questions and the answers they evoke may seem trivial and self-evident, but we must not be lulled into the invisibility of the obvious. This error of omission has been the determining factor in the success patterns of image research projects. CSJ

APPEALS DIGEST

Restoration to Duty

Restoration after military duty

On June 29, 1976, an employee left his job to go into military service. He was honorably discharged on September 15, 1976, and on November 18, applied for his former position. The agency refused to rehire him, because, it said, he was awaiting court sentencing on a conviction for illegal possession of a weapon, and had an otherwise unfavorable "record."

The Federal Employee Appeals Authority field office* found that a former employee is entitled to a job as a matter of right after meeting the criteria for restoration. The field office further decided that the employee met the three criteria, in that he: (1) served less than 5 years in the military; (2) was released under honorable conditions; and (3) applied for his job within 90 days of release from the service.

In addition, the field office found that the agency's reasons for not restoring him related to his suitability as distinguished from his qualifications. Such reasons do not relieve the agency of the obligation to rehire the employee.

Thus, the FEAA field office found that the agency had violated his right to full and proper restoration after military service and ordered the agency to restore him and pay him back salary as well. (Decision No. NY035370002.)

* Citing provisions of the law contained in title 38 of the U.S. Code, part 353 of civil service regulations,and chapter 353 of the Federal Personnel Manual.

Discrimination Complaints

Failure to appear at hearing

The employee filed a discrimination complaint with his agency, and requested a hearing before a complaints examiner after receiving the agency's proposed decision. On the day of the hearing, employee's representative appeared but not the employee. Since the representative did not wish to proceed in the absence of the employee, the complaints examiner returned the case to the agency without a hearing. The agency canceled the complaint for failure to prosecute, and employee appealed to the Appeals Review Board.

The Board found that both employee and his representative had been notified of the hearing date, and neither had asked for a postponement. Under these circumstances, the Board found that employee had waived his right to a hearing.

The Board noted, however, that regulations provide that a complaint may be resolved, instead of canceled for failure to prosecute, if enough information is available. The Board found that the record contained adequate evidence on which to base a decision.

Accordingly, the Board reversed the agency decision and returned the case to the agency for settlement. (Decision No. RB071370585.)

Adverse Actions

Reduction in rank

The employee was reassigned from one position to another at the same grade. Six months later, his new position was found to be improperly classified one grade level too high, and he was changed to a lower grade with the position.

He appealed to the FEAA field office, alleging that his reassignment constituted a reduction in rank.

The field office found, however, that a reassignment can constitute a reduction in rank *only* if the agency is aware at the time of the reassignment that the position is improperly classified. The field office found that in this case the agency was unaware of the misclassification at the time of the reassignment.

Accordingly, the field office found that the action was not a reduction in rank, and that the agency was not required to use adverse action or reduction-in-force procedures.

The employee's subsequent change to lower grade under adverse action procedures was reviewed and sustained by the field office. (Decision No. DC752B70238.)

Appeals processing

The employee appealed to FEAA after being fired from her job. After processing, FEAA notified her, and the agency, that the record in the case was closed.

FEAA later wrote to her, however, asking whether, in her letter of appeal, she had been trying to allege that her firing was in reprisal for filing an earlier EEO complaint. She replied that she was not alleging reprisal. The next day, she again wrote to FEAA stating that she had changed her mind and now wished to allege reprisal and discrimination.

The FEAA returned her letter with a note indicating that it could not be accepted because the record had been closed after receipt of her earlier letter denying that reprisal was involved. Then the FEAA field office issued a decision affirming the appellant's removal.

The Appeals Review Board granted her request for reopening.

On reconsideration, the Board found that FEAA had misapplied the Commission regulation on closing the record. After the record was closed to the appellant, FEAA had accepted into the record some evidence it had previously requested from the agency. It was true that the materials had been requested by the field office before closing the record, but the Board held that it was inconsistent to hold the record open to receive materials from one party and not the other.

The FEAA decision was overturned and the case sent back to the field office for a new decision based on reconsideration of the issues appellant sought to raise. (Decision No. RB752B70141 (DA752B60315).)

Employee answer

The employee appealed his firing to the FEAA. The FEAA noted that the notice of proposed adverse action advised him of his right to reply orally and in writing within a specified time, and that it further directed him to reply to a named individual. He replied in writing after the time limit, about 5 days before getting the decision letter, and his reply was addressed to an individual other than the one specified. But FEAA held that the agency's refusal to consider the answer was a procedural error.

The Appeals Review Board granted the agency's request for reopening. On reconsideration, the Board found that the appellant had not followed instructions for submitting a reply, as specified in the notice. The Board held that the agency was under no obligation to retrieve the decision that had already been prepared, and it reversed the field office decision.

The Board indicated that the agency might have had an obligation to consider the late reply if it had been properly addressed and accompanied by an explanation of the circumstances that led to late delivery. (Decision No. RB752B70163 (DE752B60070).)

—Paul D. Mahoney

HONOR OR STIGMA?

by Cary B. Barad and Irene Gold

Office of Human Resources
Social Security Administration

Do disabled employees think awards for the handicapped are demeaning? The authors say "yes," based on results of a Social Security Administration survey. Do *Journal* readers agree? We'll be glad to publish opposing viewpoints. Thoughts expressed in this article are those of the authors (and survey participants) and do not reflect Civil Service Commission policy.

MANAGERS in our agency have had very little reason to question the value of special recognition for outstanding disabled workers. Until recently.

Up to now, such efforts usually received unquestioned support in light of their proven usefulness in publicizing job assets of disabled employees and in lessening employer resistance to their hiring and advancement. And such awards have typically been viewed as morale builders, as incentives for those who might not ordinarily receive recognition.

Signs of Discontent

It was only after years of participating in the annual Outstanding Handicapped Federal Employee of the Year program that discontent appeared at the Social Security Administration.

Past nominees and other disabled employees here at SSA began to make known their feelings: that the use of an individual's physical condition as a basis for reward fosters separateness and inequality. A frequently heard complaint was that the award singles out the disabled as members of a minority group, and that it applies negative connotations to the distinction. And it was argued that in view of the pending (now signed) HEW regulations banning discrimination against the handicapped, such awards had probably outlived their usefulness.

The Survey

To assess the validity of these allegations, SSA surveyed a 40 percent random sample of full-time employees who had previously identified themselves as having a physical impairment.

Thirty respondents vehemently refused to participate on the ground that they had no disability. Although all recipients were instructed not to identify themselves by name, some of these employees did, so we were able to do a partial recheck of our listing. In each case, without exception, a permanent impairment (amputation, blindness, etc.) was found. This suggests that nearly 10 percent of those SSA employees having documented physical impairments refused to identify with their disabled peers.

Seventy-seven percent of the 287 questionnaires we sent out were returned for inclusion in the survey.

Results

Most (72 percent) respondents agreed that SSA's participation in the Outstanding Handicapped Federal Employee Award program is a good way to publicize the fact that disabled workers are helping the agency; and/or that they can perform as well as those without handicaps (70 percent). Half viewed the award as evidence of the agency's concern for them and their problems.

Two-thirds agreed that the agency should make some special effort to recognize the achievements of its handicapped workers.

About 61 percent agreed that the performance standards used in selecting individuals to be SSA's nominees for the Handicapped Employee Award are as rigorous as those used for agency performance awards. But 53 percent doubted that the agency's disabled are equitably considered for nonhandicap-connected awards.

About 25 percent felt that the Outstanding Handicapped Em-

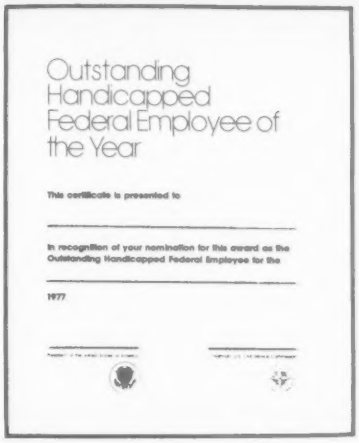
ployee Award portrays disabled workers as "different" or "not as good" as employees without handicaps, while another 25 percent were undecided. Only about half were able to state with certainty that the award is not demeaning.

Only 56 percent indicated that they would accept the Outstanding Handicapped Employee Award if selected tomorrow. While just 16 percent stated flatly that they would not accept the award, 27 percent were undecided how they would react. Conversely, 78 percent would welcome receipt of an honor award if their handicap were not a consideration for selection, while 54 percent would not want a regular performance award that mentioned their handicap.

Only 55 percent were in favor of SSA's participation in the Outstanding Handicapped Employee Award program. While only 15 percent thought it should be discontinued, nearly one in three were undecided.

Those who wanted the agency to go on participating in the Outstanding Handicapped Employee Award program were asked if they had any suggestions for change. Among the recommendations cited were those pertaining to renaming the award ("Certificate of Merit," "Special Effort Award," etc.) and/or providing more consideration of disabled employees working in "nonglamorous" lower graded positions. Others felt that disabled employees with severe but nonvisible impairments (heart disease, diabetes, etc.) are being overlooked in favor of those having more "dramatic" (e.g., wheelchair) disabilities, and that the current definition of "handicapped" unfairly eliminates aged employees from consideration. Finally, some objected to the perception that award selection may be based, in part, on such irrelevant personality traits as cheerfulness.

All study respondents were asked to describe, in their own words, their overall feelings toward


Outstanding Handicapped Federal Employee of the Year

This certificate is presented to

In recognition of your nomination for this award as the Outstanding Handicapped Federal Employee for the

1977

the Handicapped Employee Award, and more than half did so. A number of general kinds of themes emerged. Most striking was that many of those expressing positive feelings toward the award also sought to depersonalize their reactions. In paraphrased form, this theme is best expressed as, "The award is nice for those people with severe disabilities . . . but not for me . . . I am not really that bad off!"

Summary

Most physically disabled employees favor special recognition for the handicapped, and see the Outstanding Handicapped Employee Award as a useful tool for educating the public. On the other hand, barely half of the respondents could state unequivocally that the award is not demeaning. While half favor going on with SSA's participation in the award program, about four out of every five would prefer to receive an honor award that does not take their handicap into account. Similarly, 54 percent would not want an award that mentions their handicap, and only 56 percent would accept the Handicapped Award if selected tomorrow.

Implications

It appears that the value and impact of handicapped employee award systems can no longer be taken for granted, and that a closer examination is warranted. The present study, for example, suggests that awards for the handicapped may not be particularly attractive to those for whom they were designed. The extent to which employees with disabilities even wish to be perceived as handicapped may also be open to question.

In terms of possible alternative approaches, it appears that the "model" program would be one that retains the desirable elements of special recognition and public enlightenment, but which has maximum acceptance among the target population. One practice that might effect such a balance would be to carefully restrict the group of eligible disabled employees to those whose impairments are markedly severe in relation to the requirements of their jobs.

Another, more radical, possibility for change would be to eliminate awards that link employee recognition with physical condition. Under this alternative, an agency or firm would simply integrate disabled and nondisabled employees into a single honor awards program. (Although many employers, such as SSA, give all employees equal consideration for all performance awards, the results of this study suggest that special handicap-connected awards may be misperceived by disabled workers as precluding them from consideration for other honor awards.)

A final alternative would be to create a special forum for recognizing those employees (both disabled and nondisabled) who make outstanding contributions to furthering the affirmative action objectives of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act. Since this last option seems to come closest to meeting the goals of a "model" program, as described above, it is the one most likely to be endorsed by SSA in the future.

CSJ

LEGAL DECISIONS

Freedom of Information
Celmins v. *Department of Treasury*

During the past decade agencies and departments within the executive branch have responded to a series of legislative acts designed to accommodate increased public scrutiny of the Government at work. The Freedom of Information Act, first in this series, was created to overcome perceived excesses of administrative secrecy. In adopting the Act, however, Congress demonstrated a sensitivity to the conflict between the public's right to Government information and the individual's right to privacy. They included an exemption permitting an agency to withhold "personnel, medical, and similar files . . . which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy."

In evaluating the applicability of this exemption to cases under judicial review, the courts, just as Congress instructed, have tried to balance both the public and private interests. The courts, also just as Congress instructed, have construed the exemption narrowly to promote maximum disclosure of agency information; moreover, as Congress continues to advance the concept of greater openness in Government, the courts appear to be even more inclined to tilt toward disclosure. An example of how courts use the balancing test to decide cases involving this exemption is illustrated in *Celmins* v. *Department of Treasury*.

The *Celmins* case evolved from a merit promotion within the Internal Revenue Service for which three IRS attorneys applied. The two unsuccessful candidates made a request, pursuant to the FOIA, for materials contained in the promotion file. IRS furnished each requester the portion of the promotion file pertaining to himself as well as certain general documents. IRS refused, however, to release all the information about the selected candidate, whose identity was known to the requesters, asserting that disclosure of the withheld information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy.

Upon exhausting their administrative remedies, the requesters brought an action in the U.S. District Court to compel disclosure by IRS.

Three documents pertaining to the selected candidate were before the Court: (1) the promotion appaisal form; (2) the promotion evaluation scoresheet; and (3) the promotion application.

The promotion appraisal consisted of numerical ratings and narrative remarks on the selected candidate's previous job performance.

. The promotion evaluation scoresheet contained numerical ratings, total scores, and narrative comments representing the assessments of all promotion panel members. IRS had already disclosed to the requesters the total scores and narative comments shown on the selected candidate's scoresheet.

The promotion application was an internal agency form designed to elicit limited items of information from an applicant with respect to awards or training relevant to the position applied for. The promotion application form also calls for the current position of the candidate at the date of application, and IRS had already furnished to the requesters this item of information about the selected candidate.

After reviewing the three documents, the Court defined the evaluation of an individual's work performance as personal information, and said that releasing it would be an invasion of privacy. The Court also assumed, without deciding, that the release of information about an applicant's education and training would also be an invasion of privacy. But the Court rejected the Government's argument that sensitive information may be withheld whenever it can be associated with an identified individual, and instead discussed the issue in terms of whether the invasion of privacy would be clearly unwarranted.

Noting that the unsuccessful candidates needed the three documents to demonstrate that they were better qualified than the selected candidate, the Court stated: "In pursuing their individual claims, plaintiffs also help promote two important public interests. They help ensure that the Government fairly follows its own merit promotion procedures, and they encourage the use of nondisruptive grievance procedures in employment disputes."

In weighing the competing public and private interests, the Court concluded that, on balance, disclosing the contested documents would not result in a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy. Influenced to a significant extent by a pledge that the documents sought by the requesters would be used only for their grievance proceedings, the Court found that the pri-

vacy intrusion would be limited. A footnote, however, contains a warning: "Should this material in fact become widely disseminated, Courts would necessarily take this experience into account in future similar cases."

The Court ordered IRS to release the three documents to the requesters, but allowed the agency to delete the selected candidate's name from the contested documents to minimize the potential for an unnecessary invasion of privacy.

There is at least a slight possibility that the *Celmins* decision will not stand. IRS has asked the Department of Justice to relitigate the issues addressed in *Celmins* should they appear in a later lawsuit. The request for relitigation was made on the basis of the Court's erroneous assumption that disclosure of the promotion documents was necessary to assist the requesters in pursuing a grievance. In fact, nonselection cannot be the subject of a grievance based on an unsuccessful applicant's self-perception that his or her qualifications are superior to those of the selected candidate.

From this invalid assumption flowed the Court's finding that the two public interests were important enough to justify the acknowledged invasion of the selected candidate's privacy. IRS submitted to Justice its position that, without the incorrect assumption, the invasion of privacy conceded by the Court in *Celmins* would become clearly unwarranted.

Notwithstanding the uncertain durability of the *Celmins* decision, it illustrates the general bent of courts to elevate the public interest. The decision's corollary illustration is that the "clearly unwarranted" qualification imposes a heavy burden upon an agency seeking to establish that documents may properly be withheld under the privacy exemption.

—Ann C. Wilson

mid-career opportunity for Federal executives

WANT TO SWAP JOBS?

by Rebecca Woodward

QUALIFIED middle management men and women in the Federal Government are being vigorously sought for participation in the President's Executive Interchange Program.

Now in its 8th year, this 1-year exchange provides a valuable management development experience for high-potential mid-career executives, specifically those in grades 13, 14, and 15.

Designed to allow the private and public sectors to learn from each other, the interchange program arranges for business and government to swap executives for 1-year assignments, not necessarily on a one-for-one direct exchange. The executives have the chance to gain experience by crossing lines during the important middle period of their careers.

Success Stories

Gordon Plants, an Export-Import Bank planner, recently completed his interchange assignment with the General Electric Company. Charged with finding international sources for long-term financing of the company's export sales, Plants was so successful that G.E. plans to fill two permanent positions to continue his efforts.

Jim Huff is an audit manager for the Navy who recently returned from assignment as a management consultant for the Cabot Corporation. Based upon his recommendations and under his supervision, Cabot began a major reorganization of their accounting procedures.

To date, over 400 executives from the Federal Government, private industry, and higher education have taken part.

Federal executives have gone into such fields as urban development, international relations, management information systems, economic planning, and industry analysis. They have had to use their management skills and technical expertise to show their private sector hosts where major savings could be made, and have helped in technical computing efforts, systems designs, and program analyses.

REBECCA WOODWARD is a freelance writer.

According to Jay F. Morris, Executive Director of the President's Executive Interchange Program, virtually every area of the Federal Government contains qualified candidates. Executives in all fields are eligible, but the expected demand among potential private sector hosts for the coming year is highest for those Government executives with accounting, financial, and environmental backgrounds.

Do You Qualify?

Nominees for the interchange program must have a proven record of management ability, significant on-the-job accomplishment, high intellectual capacity, and demonstrated leadership ability. To ensure the quality of candidates, all nominations must be personally approved by the head of the sponsoring Federal department or agency.

Once chosen to participate in the program, executives are matched with jobs offered by the opposite sector host organizations. There are usually three or four positions from which to choose, so partici-

pants can select the ones that give them the greatest chance for personal growth and learning.

Besides their job assignments, participants also are given an extensive education program to expose them to their new environments.

This includes a week-long seminar in Washington at the start of the interchange year, weekly informal talk sessions with prominent national figures, and a mid-year, 10-day international study seminar in Europe. During visits to several major countries, the executives meet with local senior government officials to explore those countries' relationships with the United States on trade, social, political, and military policies.

Almost without exception, program "alumni" state unequivocally that they would do it again.

Everybody Benefits

"The benefits are significant," according to Morris. "The executives are able to witness first-hand the operations and decisionmaking processes of the opposite sector. They are also able to bring their particular talents to bear on a whole new set of objectives."

A full day during the executives' orientation week was devoted to Capitol Hill. Individual sessions with Congressmen, Senators, aides, and committee staff directors kept the participants busy.

Many participants feel the program has a positive effect on their careers. Joe Linneman, now with the Office of Drug Abuse Policy at OMB, has had three promotions since he ended his interchange assignment 4 years ago.

Steve Bosworth of the Department of State was an interchange executive 3 years ago. He has been promoted twice since then and recently received the Arthur S. Flemming Award for outstanding government service.

The participating organizations, whether sending or employing, benefit from the exchange by having their executives return with broadened perspectives and insights that will be of significant value in later positions.

Almost every Government agency and department has participated in the program at some point, and the list of private sector organizations that have taken part includes such firms as International Paper Company, Deere & Company, General Electric, AT&T, General Motors, IBM, and Xerox.

"The nation benefits," says Morris, "because the program is grooming a cadre of potential leaders for senior-level appointments in future years. These leaders will be highly talented men and women who understand not only their own sector, but the perspectives, procedures, potential, and limitations of the other as well."

Of perhaps greater importance, as President Carter stated recently, "The President's Executive Interchange Program is a positive force for marshalling our human resources. Through this effort, both the public and private sectors jointly contribute to greater sensitivity and responsiveness in the interest of all Americans."

Nomination Deadline

Nominations for the coming interchange year, which begins in September 1978, are due February 1, 1978. Potential Federal candidates should direct their inquiries either to their personnel directors or to the President's Commission on Personnel Interchange; 1900 E St. NW.; Washington, D.C. 20415; phone (202) 632-6834. CSJ

Above and Left: The Honorable Paul McCloskey, Jr. (R-California) spent a lively hour with the executives discussing legislation affecting business.

making training pay off

A CAPITAL INVESTMENT

by Chester Wright
Director, Office of Policy Plans and Systems
Bureau of Training
U.S. Civil Service Commission

THE WORDS "energy shortage" usually call to mind depleted reserves of coal, natural gas, and the like. But there is another sort of energy shortage and it's called entropy. Entropy expresses the concept that there is a finite amount of energy in the universe and that it is nonrenewable. By this concept the entire universe is slowly running down like an unimaginably huge mechanical toy.

Other philosophies of a more political bent have suggested that the same fate is overtaking the Federal Government—we are ticking slowly to a stop like a tired grandfather clock.

Whitehead in his essay on the functions of reason offers a ray of hope to dispel the gloom. He contrasts the idea of energy decline with the annual contradiction of spring. He did not live long enough to learn that something similar happens in the heavens. In ways still beyond our understanding, new stars are being born even as the old stars die.

I see no reason at all to accept as inevitable the decline and decay of government institutions. We must take heart from the lessons of nature and find ways to evoke the rebirth of an energetic and effective government. I believe that the investment in human capital through training and development is one way to renew the government.

The training and development of Federal employees is not very high on most people's list of important things the Federal Government does. This is unfortunate. I think it should be a high priority for three reasons:

☐ First, training Federal employees consumes very large amounts of resources, something in the nature of $800 million and 20,000 years of effort every year.

☐ Second, while Federal training by and large is useful as it is

presently carried out, it represents an area of enormous unrealized potential for improvement.

☐ Third, and in the specific area of management training—since capable management is needed for effective delivery of Government services, the timing, quality, and content of management training are important.

Our figures show that it is not unrealistic to expect a top-notch training course to return benefits of 100 percent. This is ten times better than what would ordinarily be considered a good return on investment.

I am not talking about some theoretical improvement based on a training course advertisement.

I am talking about improvements in productivity measured back on the job.

A 34-percent return on the investment in high-quality Federal management training has been documented. But it is frustrating that the same evaluation revealed that a more careful selection of participants could have doubled that rate.

To get a better return on the training investment, three simple conditions must be met. One must have a well-designed course. Employees who really need the training are the ones who should be selected to participate. And the trainees must have supervisors who actively support the use of newly acquired skills on the job.

Without one or all these conditions, training can be worse than useless.

It is not unrealistic to impose these conditions, either—they are entirely within the agencies' power to control.

We in the Government have a clear-cut choice between putting our training efforts to productive use or wasting them. We're not talking about a one-shot improvement. While it will take time to get to the point where every training course will return benefits substantially greater than its cost, it can be done if we make the effort.

"...the investment in human capital through training and development is one way to renew the Government."

With attention and skill, we can do it every time we offer training.

A Look at the Problems

Well then, if these kinds of benefits are possible, and possible now, what is holding us back? Let's consider the nature of the problem.

First, as an undertaking in management, the operation of the Federal Government of the United States represents an undertaking of a size and complexity that has no precedent in human history, with the possible exception of the governments of Russia and China. Humankind has simply never before tried to manage anything on the scale of what we are faced with in this country at the present time.

The sheer size of Government —and our society—presents problems in every area of management. In training, it frequently results in duplication on a massive scale. Essentially the same course may be developed by a dozen different trainers, none of whom knows or possibly cares what the others are doing.

Second, size is further complicated by dispersion. Only 12 percent of Federal employees are stationed in Washington, D.C., with the rest scattered across the country.

"...managers don't check whether or not trainees returning to work do anything differently than before..."

Dispersion presents us with the old organizational problems of centralization versus decentralization.

Centralization provides the obvious benefits of top management oversight and an ability to assemble working units big enough to realize the benefits of specialization. On the other hand, it presents the problems of isolation of top management from working-level problems and difficulties in communication.

Decentralization provides the benefit of placing decisionmaking in the hands of those close to the actual problems, and close to the sources of information. But it presents the problem of lack of control, coupled with lack of uniformity in carrying out public policy.

Workers in geographically isolated units may be serviced by someone for whom training is only one of many duties. The chance that these employees can take advantage of training opportunities, or even know about them, is materially reduced.

The third problem, also related to size, is intelligence gathering—that is, we can't keep track of the training of Federal employees. Which training techniques work best, which worst? Where are employees being well trained, and where are they not? Where are employees receiving fair and equitable treatment and where do they have access to the training opportunities they need, and where is this not happening?

The fourth major problem is rooted in the fact that we do not know everything we would like to know or should know about the way adults learn, particularly the way they apply newly acquired knowledge in a working situation. Most of what we know about the way humans learn is more applicable to children than to adults. What

we do know about adult learning tends to be centered on how they learn and behave in a classroom. Our knowledge of how that learning is or is not carried back and applied at the work site is woefully inadequate.

Uneven Picture

As a result of these and other problems, Federal training presents a highly uneven picture. There are some genuine bright spots. Some of the technical training provided Federal employees is unexcelled. Several training organizations are doing really top-notch work—they are well managed and staffed with highly skilled training professionals. Internal Revenue Service is a case in point.

But we also know that ineffective and nonproductive training exists. We know that training is used for the wrong purposes—for example, to solve problems resulting from inadequate management. We have found situations, for example, where we in the Commission were asked to help design training programs because management was not satisfied with the performance of certain employees. On investigation, we discovered that no one had ever told these employees that their work was unsatisfactory. They thought they were doing fine. In a case like this, no amount of employee training will help, it's the supervisors who need it.

We know that training is usually not linked to effective manpower planning. So the long-range requirements for trained personnel are not being met systematically. We know that some employees are not receiving training when they need it; while on the other hand, others are sent to training courses of no conceivable benefit to the Federal Government and of dubious benefit to the employees themselves.

But worst of all is the reluctance of managers to apply professional

"...managers don't distinguish between training and education."

standards to training and to trainers. We know there is a widespread practice of developing and buying unevaluated training. I mean training where no one has taken the trouble to determine if the results intended are actually produced.

There is no consistent measurement at the end of training to determine what the trainees have learned. Even more important, managers don't check whether or not trainees returning to work do anything differently than before. The question "Was it worth it?" is simply not addressed.

Why? Because managers don't distinguish between training and education. Now I don't believe that if a graduate of a liberal arts college makes less money than a truck driver or a plumber, then his or her education was "wasted." There is more to life than making money. The educated blue-collar worker can lead a fuller life than the noneducated.

Accountability

Training Federal employees at taxpayer expense is quite another matter. It is as simple as this: Are employees more productive after training than before? And is the value of that increased productivity greater than the cost of training?

These questions must be asked, and they must be answered "yes" if we are to continue to justify the amount of money we spend on Federal training.

"What we would really like to do is work ourselves out of a job as training consultants."

While we accept that it is necessary to recognize the existence of problems before they can be solved, we also realize that more is required of the Commission than to sit back and criticize training operations of other Federal agencies. We have established a program to provide trainers and managers with practical help. That help consists of research and development, and a team of training consultants who can help with on-site problem solving nationwide.

We found it necessary to establish our own R&D activity because many of the problems we face simply do not have ready-made solutions. We found, if we wanted answers that worked, we would have to start at the beginning and develop our own.

Our consulting teams perform a valuable service. There is a limit to the help anyone can get from the written word. The Department of Agriculture discovered this 50 years ago when they started a revolution in American agriculture by stationing county agents throughout rural America.

I think you will be interested in some of the products we have developed and the impact that their delivery has already produced.

We have developed a comprehensive set of analytic procedures that help us:

Find out exactly what training employees need.

Project the cost of the training.

And predict in dollars and cents the value of meeting training needs.

Problem Solving Through Basics

Anyone equipped with these basic tools can solve an amazing array of problems. For instance, they were used to determine how training could help reduce the backlog in a General Services Administration supply center. Based on the analysis, training was de-

signed that reduced the backlog. Since the analysis also showed that even with training the backlog could not be overcome with existing staff, management had the facts to guide recruitment of more employees.

These new methods have also been used to revise two Commission management seminars. The changes will result in more effective use of the participants' time in class, by having them concentrate on those subjects that contribute the most to their services back on the job.

The analytic methods have been used to demonstrate in an Army helicopter repair facility that it is cheaper in the long run to train metal workers in a workshop setting than through traditional apprentice methods.

The same approach can be used to evaluate contractor proposals. For example, on a single large training contract, the Navy was able to trim $250,000 off their cost by showing that the contractor was overestimating the cost of training aids.

We have used these analyses to show that subject coverage in an IRS processing center training course could be redistributed to improve the effectiveness of the course without increasing the cost.

The tools helped to evaluate a GSA rapid reading course showing return on investment from a low of 10 percent to a high of 1,000 percent, thus providing management with information needed to decide whether or not to continue the course.

Examples of other ways we are applying professional-quality training skills include:

☐ Assessing training needs for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in New Mexico, resulting in a region-wide upward mobility program.

☐ Helping the National Transportation Safety Board to establish a new format for their Air Safety Investigation School, and training their subject matter experts to design and deliver their own training program.

☐ Helping the State of Maine Personnel Department to establish a State training program for all agency and personnel department staff.

☐ Helping the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to develop an agency training policy.

☐ Helping the Bureau of the Census to determine the usefulness of advanced educational technology in training enumerators. Our findings showed that they could use technology to save at least 450 staff years for each major census; this translates into some $4.5 million.

"...decision making about some aspects of training will have to be made at higher levels than ever before."

Going Out of Business?

Naturally enough, we are proud of these and other accomplishments that improve the training of Federal employees. What we would really like to do, however, is work ourselves out of a job as training consultants.

The way to do this, in our opinion, is to help Federal trainers become so skillful that our direct assistance will not be needed. We have made some progress in that direction.

"We cannot support training as the largest surviving cottage industry in the industrial age."

We have completed a special study that spells out all the trainers' responsibilities in a first-class training operation. We have listed all the skills and abilities that trainers need to carry out these tasks. Based on this, we are expanding our already substantial array of training courses for trainers. And we are tapping other agencies that have already done much in this area for training they might offer.

Where Do We Go From Here?

The real question, however, is where do we go from here? How do we change a trickle of individual successes into the flood of innovation and improvement that can carry us to the ideal level of excellence that I claim is possible?

First of all, since what we are doing now is successful, we will do more. We will develop better and easier-to-use methods for evaluating training and determining training needs.

We will push hard for the professionalization of Federal trainers, and provide them with better tools to do their job; by providing better training for trainers; by improving the quality of newcomers to the profession; and by working with schools and professional associations to encourage professional development of trainers.

We will analyze the tasks associated with the major government "occupations." Work in procurement jobs is already underway. Information from these analyses will permit us to construct and publish career-long development patterns, and to see that appropriate training is available. It will also make it possible for individuals and agencies to develop realistic, long-range career plans and arrange for appropriate training.

At present, the training many employees get bears scant relation to their long-range career goals. Training has little or no cumulative

impact. It is also the exception for the training of individual employees to support the long-range staffing needs of their agencies. This lack of planning, and lack of information to support planning, is the target for our next concentration of effort through occupational analysis.

Based on information from these analyses of occupations, we should be able to realize the benefits of large-scale training, employing the most modern technology. This will undoubtedly require that decision-making about some aspects of training will have to be made at higher levels than ever before. This is a small price to pay for more effective training for more employees at greatly reduced unit cost.

I am well aware of the cherished privilege of instructors to run "their" classrooms exactly as they see fit. However, I am convinced that as far as the Federal Government is concerned, we can no longer afford the emotional luxury of maintaining training as a living memento of simpler times. We cannot support training as the largest surviving cottage industry in the industrial age.

These, then, will be our three major areas of activity in the near future: (1) developing better, easier-to-use methods for evaluating training and for determining training needs; (2) fostering integration of the needs of individuals and organizations into long-range development programs, including the introduction of technology-supported training across agency lines; and (3) improving the professional qualifications of Federal trainers.

"We intend to see that trainers employed by the Federal Government are truly professional."

Two other things should have a major impact on improving the training of Federal Government employees.

First, we intend to expand our communication links. It is important that good work not escape our attention and that we include that work in our tool kit for improving Federal training.

We intend to expand our communication linkages within Government—particularly with military training, where R&D and improved methods for delivering and managing training are going on, all of which are important to us and seldom make their way quickly into the civilian field.

We intend to expand our association with professional societies, and with the academic community.

Second, we intend to see to it that professional standards for training civilian employees are understood, adopted, and applied throughout the Federal Government. The Commission has more authority under the Government Employees Training Act than it has chosen to use in the past. In the future we intend to use the full authority given to us under law, and if that is not enough to accomplish our purposes we will ask for the necessary legislation.

Specifically, we intend to see to it that training developed or purchased for use by Government employees is subjected to systematic and continuing measurement both in terms of what is learned and what improvements that learning makes in employee performance. We intend to see to it that trainers employed by the Federal Government are truly professional.

In no case will we move blindly ahead with any new program or new idea. These approaches will be discussed, evaluated, and shared with our colleagues in the Federal community; but we do intend to proceed with what I can best characterize as cautious impatience. In this regard, we have received a great deal of detailed and helpful guidance from the work of the Federal Personnel Management Project.

The specific examples of benefits I mention are mere appetizers. The main course remains before us. We know that enormous improvements can be made in Federal training and that these improvements can be achieved with the knowledge, skills, and resources now available. It is clearly our responsibility to see that they are achieved. We intend to do everything in our power to see that the main course satisfies.

Good Writing...Good Management

Every day, you as a manager must make yourself understood by your employees and the public you serve. In a large organization, the most usual means of communication is writing, so to manage well, you (or someone) must write well.

President Carter has emphasized a strong belief that language must be simplified. CAB Chairman Alfred Kahn attracted popular attention last July when he attacked the "disease of Gobbledegook." ICC Chairman O'Neal set up a "gobbledegook committee" and declared to his 2,000 employees that "English is a remarkably clear, flexible, and useful language." Others have also called for clear writing, but enough for now.

The example of before-and-after writing below should illustrate that simple writing is possible. This is a first in a series of Journal attempts to explain the why and how of writing clearly. Your comments and examples are welcome.

Bad

SUBJECT: Scheduling Annual Leave to Avoid Forfeiture

Leave year 1977 ends December 31, 1977. Employees who have accumulated annual leave in excess of the maximum allowable carryover into the 1978 leave year should plan to reduce their leave balances to avoid forfeiture. Any annual leave planned for use after November 19, 1977, should be requested and approved in writing either on a Standard Form 71, "Request for Leave", or a memorandum. If leave is cancelled because of workload or illness and a request for restoration is made because the leave cannot be rescheduled during leave year 1977, only leave that has been approved in advance, in writing, can be restored.

Employees whose statements of earnings and leave (pay slips) show a balance in the "Projected Annual Leave to be Taken By End of Leave Year to Avoid Forfeiture" block should submit to the appropriate approving official a plan or schedule for bringing their balance to or below the ceiling by the end of the leave year. This should be done early to afford the best chance of having the plan or schedule approved and to provide time to make alternate plans if part or all of the schedule is disapproved.

Some employees will, no doubt, forfeit annual leave for one reason or another. Should this occur, leave may be restored if the forfeiture is the result of: (a) administrative error when the error causes the loss of annual leave otherwise accruable; (b) exigencies of the public business when the annual leave was scheduled and approved in writing, in advance; or (c) sickness of the employee preventing the use of annual leave that was scheduled in writing, in advance of the sickness.

For a request for restoration of annual leave that was forfeited as the result of an exigency of the public business to be considered, there must have been no reasonable alternative to the cancellation of scheduled leave or for the assignment of the employee who forfeited annual leave because of the emergency, and there must have been a specific beginning and ending date of the emergency.

Employees who forfeit leave as a result of any of the above conditions may request restoration by submitting a memorandum to PLRD through their bureau or regional director or head of staff office. Requests are to be made after December 31, 1977, and must state why the leave was forfeited. A copy of the approved leave schedule for the period must be attached. Questions concerning this policy may be referred to the Office of Policy and Program Development, PLRD, (202) [illegible].

Good

SUBJECT: Leave—Use It or Lose It

When you get your next pay statement, look at the box in the lower left-hand corner (PROJECTED ANNUAL LEAVE TO BE TAKEN...). If the number in the box is more than "0," you should plan now to take at least the number of hours of leave shown in the box BEFORE DECEMBER 31. If you don't arrange to schedule that leave, you will lose that number of hours. Here's how to avoid that:

1. Send a memo or a Standard Form 71 ("Request for Leave") to your supervisor, giving the dates that you want to take leave. State that this is "use or lose leave."
2. Make sure that you get back the approval in writing and keep a copy.
3. If your request for leave is not approved, ask your supervisor when you can schedule your leave so that it can be approved. Then get the approval in writing.
4. If an emergency workload or your illness keeps you from taking the leave that has already been scheduled and approved, and you end up not being able to take it before the end of the year, you have to send a memo to the Personnel and Labor Relations Division explaining why you could not take the leave. Attach a copy of the leave approval.

If you have any questions, please call the Office of Policy and Program Development in Personnel at 8-[illegible] ([illegible] for central office employees).

DUNAGIN'S PEOPLE / *by Ralph Dunagin*

"This report is brief, informative, and to the point . . .you'd better do it over."

Courtesy Field Newspaper Syndicate

Staffing-Needs Planning: Try It, You Might Like It

Generally speaking, personnel workers who are asked to do any kind of planning for their organization's staffing needs balk at the request. They make such comments as:

"It's too complicated."
"It takes too much extra staff and time."
"It's not worth the effort."
"The math is too difficult."
"That's management's job."

Part of this distress stems from a lack of precision in the use of the phrase "manpower planning," and part from a lack of current information on the subject.

To help solve both these problems, the research staff in the Policy Analysis and Development Division of CSC's Bureau of Policies and Standards has developed *Planning Your Staffing Needs: A Handbook for Personnel Workers.*

Language and Literature

To deal with the language problem, the *Handbook* first defines the diverse activities that have been given the one label "manpower planning." The activity of interest to most government workers is systematic planning of the personnel needs of individual organizations.

This type of planning consists of two aspects. The first—work force planning—is planning the number and kinds of workers needed to do an organization's work in the future. Work force planning is performed by program managers. The second aspect—staffing-needs planning—is systematic estimation of the number and kinds of personnel management actions that must be taken to provide the required work force. This is the planning phase that concerns personnel workers.

The *Handbook* gives some policy guidance that, among other things, deals with the necessary two-way interaction between management's work force planning and personnel's staffing-needs planning.

Even with the knowledge that staffing-needs planning is the basic personnel plan, the personnel worker up to now could find virtually nothing in the current literature about how to do it. That is because what technical method literature there is has been almost all devoted to work force planning, agency management's job.

Planning Your Staffing Needs changes this dramatically. It is the first publication to provide a comprehensive how-to on analyzing staffing needs.

Unique Features of the Handbook

The *Handbook* is also the first publication to combine policy guidance to agencies with technical how-to-do-it materials on total staffing-needs planning.

The functions making up total staffing-needs planning will allow personnel workers to make more sophisticated analyses and projections than now possible. Using the methodology described in the *Handbook* can give personnel management a more participative role in an agency's work force and program planning.

About the Techniques

Although many people would like to be able to do staffing-needs planning without having to do any math, the truth is that it just can't be done effectively that way.

The *Handbook* deals with some sophisticated techniques, but the methods have been kept as simple as possible. For this purpose the mathematical techniques involved are described from the ground up. It was assumed that some users would have no statistical background. For these people there is a basic course in the fundamental math that is the foundation for the more advanced techniques discussed later in the *Handbook*.

Actually, three levels of techniques are used to describe the pivotal function of staffing-needs planning, which is to analyze and project employee turnover.

The first is a nomograph method that requires only some data, a pencil, and a ruler.

The second is a manual statistical method. The description of this method begins with a discussion of elementary concepts and, step-by-step, builds in everything a user needs to know to perform turnover analysis by hand (or with the help of a calculator).

The third level involves the use of computer programs, both by users accustomed to computer programs are discussed in the *Handbook*. A number of considerations were involved in their design. Every program is:

☐ *General in application*—usable by anyone in any organization.

☐ *Complete and self-standing*—all calculations, including statistical tests, are done by the program.

☐ *Technically compact and simple*—the programs are written in FORTRAN IV (one of the most common computer languages), use elementary commands, and require a minimum of computer storage space.

☐ *Fully documented*—appendices provided for each program include:

—*Program Listing*—a complete listing of the entire program,

—*Operation Manual*—a complete set of step-by-step instructions for the program operator, and

—*Technical Analysis*—a detailed analysis of the statistical techniques used by the program to get its results.

Each program performs a specific function relating to staffing-needs planning. Three deal with the analysis and projection of turnover, the fourth with analyzing employees' advancement, and the fifth with estimating future hiring needs.

Practical Applications of the Techniques

The *Handbook* turnover analysis techniques may be used not only for straightforward projections, but also to answer many practical personnel-type questions. These include:

☐ What is an employee's probability of remaining with your organization?

☐ How do you determine how many employees will be lost from a given group?

☐ How many employees must be hired now to have a certain number on board 3 years from now?

☐ How does employee length of service affect training decisions?

☐ How do changes in hiring levels affect a group's turnover rates? For example, what happens to turnover in a hiring freeze? In a RIF situation?

The advancement analysis techniques can be used to determine if a subgroup of employees is advancing in line with the normal pattern of an overall group. Average grade trends can be analyzed.

The hiring-needs model can be used to simulate different planning situations. For example, what will happen to hiring patterns if an organization experiences dramatic growth? Remains stable? Loses a substantial number of positions? The model also gives information on what happens to attrition (quits, retirements, etc.) in any given situation.

Who Can Use?

Planning Your Staffing Needs intentionally has been designed to be directly applicable not only in Federal installations, but also in both State and local governments, and in nongovernmental organizations as well, including private industry and colleges and universities. (Copies of the *Handbook* are available from GPO.)

In addition, *Handbook* techniques can be used in any organization: large or small, elaborate computer facilities or little to no computer access, sophisticated statistical staff or nonstatistical staff, simple or complex occupational mix, etc.

One warning: This technology is by no means the final answer in the staffing-needs planning technical area. The *Handbook* is a research product, not a mandatory program, and users should add their own ideas to further adapt the techniques for their own needs.

—Dona Thurston

fed facts

How Cost Effective are YOUR Personnel Information Methods?

Answering general questions about a Federal personnel matter -- about retirement, say -- can cost:

- **98¢** —if it takes a GS-7 employee in your office 10 minutes to provide the information.
- **35¢**—if you give the employee a FED FACTS 3 purchased from the Superintendent of Documents.
- **7¢** —or less if you give the employee a FED FACTS 3 by riding the Civil Service Commission's requisition at the time of printing.

Take advantage of these cost effective pamphlets. Watch for CSC Bulletins announcing revisions or reprints (schedule below) -- and order enough to go around.

FED FACTS 1 on the Incentive Awards Program (Jan)
FED FACTS 2 on Political Activity (Aug)
FED FACTS 3 on the Civil Service Retirement System (Jun)
FED FACTS 4 on Financial Protection (Dec)
FED FACTS 5 on the Federal Merit Promotion Policy (Jul)
FED FACTS 6 on Serving the Public: The Extra Step (Sep)
FED FACTS 7 on the Federal Wage System (Apr)
FED FACTS 8 on Meeting Your Financial Obligations (Dec)
FED FACTS 9 on Maternity Benefits (Oct)
FED FACTS 10 on the Discrimination Complaints System (Nov)
FED FACTS 11 on Employee Appeals from Adverse Actions (Feb)
FED FACTS 12 on the Displaced Employee Program (Jan)
FED FACTS 13 on Reductions in Force in Federal Agencies (May)
FED FACTS 14 on Reemployment Rights of Federal Employees Who Perform Duty in the Armed Forces (Nov)
FED FACTS 15 on Federal Labor Relations (Oct)
FED FACTS 16 on Pay Under the General Schedule (Apr)
FED FACTS 17 on the Cost of Living Allowance for Federal Employees (Feb)
FED FACTS 18 on the Intergovernmental Mobility Program (Sep)
FED FACTS 19 on How Your GS Job Is Classified (Mar)

The New and the Novel

The following is a list of new publications that may interest you.

Alternative Work Schedules. Issue No. 17 in the series, *Information on Equal Employment Opportunity for State and Local Governments.* Defines various alternative work patterns—flexitime, part-time employment, job sharing, and compressed workweek—and describes how they can be used to help students, working mothers, the handicapped, older employees, and others who for various reasons cannot work a regular schedule. Available from U.S. Civil Service Commission, BIPP/PMIS, Room 2312, 1900 E St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20415. (202) 632-7748

Collective Bargaining in the Federal Sector. Where we are, where we may be going, and implications for managers. (006-000-01009-1) $1.50

A Guide for Improving Performance Evaluation. *Personnel Management Series No. 28.* Gives up-to-date guidance on how to appraise employee performance and guard against bias in appraisals. State-of-the-art information is presented from a practical viewpoint.

Congressional Documents Relating to Civil Service, Supplement No. 10. Index of reports, documents, committee prints, and hearings of the 94th Congress pertaining to civil service. Materials listed by subject, agency, and testifier. Limited copies available from U.S. Civil Service Commission, Library, Room 5H27, 1900 E St., N.W.,Washington, D.C. 20415. (202) 632-7640

Labor-Management Relations in the Federal Service. Answers the most asked questions about Executive Order 11491 and the Federal labor relations program. (052-003-00139-0) $.75

Plain Talk About Employee Incentives— A Manager's Guide to the Federal Incentive Awards Program. Desk reference for mid- and senior-level managers, explains how incentive awards can be used to increase productivity, describes what the role of a manager should be in supporting the awards program, and provides basic information on statutory and regulatory requirements, for agency Incentive Awards Programs.

Planning Your Staffing Needs: A Handbook for Personnel Workers. For description, see article on page 42.

The Skills Survey—What It Is and How It Works. *Personnel Management Series No. 29.* Gives guidance to agency personnel and Equal Employment Opportunity staff in the planning, implementation, application, and special consideration of a skills survey within an Upward Mobility program.

A Summary of Selected Legislation Relating to the Handicapped 1975—1976. Contains brief synopses of legislation enacted by the 94th Congress that affects physically and mentally "handicapped" persons. It is designed to help program planners, students, and interested citizens gain insight into Federal policy formulation. (017-060-00130-5) $.70

U.S. Working Women: A Databook. Presents a wide array of information on the characteristics of working women in the United States and changing trends over the past quarter century. (029-001-02112-7) $2.50

Unless otherwise noted, these publications are available from U.S. Government Printing Office, Public Documents Department, Washington, D.C. 20402. GPO stock numbers and single issue prices follow the above listings. When this information is not shown, the publication had not been printed at *Journal* presstime, so the stock number and price were not known. Once GPO prints the publication, that information can be obtained by calling (202) 783-3238. Prices for bulk orders of the publications can be obtained at that same number.

A more thorough listing of new publications in the field of personnel administration is the monthly periodical, *Personnel Literature.* It lists books, magazine and journal articles, and other material by subject. A year's subscription costs $12.25 and can be ordered from GPO at the above address.

To receive a free monthly listing of all Bureau of Labor Statistics publications, write to: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Room 1539, GAO Bldg., Washington, D.C 20212.

—Howard Stevens

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